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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF CHILDREN'S INTERESTS IN SPIRITUAL READING

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

SISTER MARY EUGENIA KEALY

OF THE

SISTERS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY
SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
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S. M. E.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE
CHAPTER I.	Introduction	1
	The Problem	1
	The Purpose	5
	Previous Studies in Children's Interests in Reading	5
CHAPTER II.	Technique and Procedure	33
	A List of Spiritual Reading Books Graded according to the Winnetka Technique	36
CHAPTER III.	A Graded List of Books Based on Median Reading Grades and Children's Preferences	49
	A Comparison of the Reading Tastes of Girls and Boys	59
CHAPTER IV.	Interpretation of Children's Reactions	68
	Desirable and Undesirable Qualities in Children's Books.	68
CHAPTER V.	Children's Ideals	85
CHAPTER VI.	Summary, Conclusions and Suggestions	98

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

The elementary school is undoubtedly recognized as the most important unit in the entire school system. Here the child's future is made or marred, and unfortunately it is the latter result that only too frequently occurs. Much of this is due to the confusion of aims that obtains among educators generally. And yet these same educators are constantly emphasizing the fact that it is the complete development of the child that must be striven for. We question very seriously, however, the secular educator's understanding of the expression—the complete development of the child—since he makes no adequate provision for the development of the soul. This is the main function of religion in the life of an individual and *this* is the very thing that finds no place in the curriculum of the public schools of our country as organized at present.

What is development? "It is a series of changes initiated by an internal principle in response to an external influence with the preservation of type." [1] In the biological sense this is easily understood. As applied to the development of the soul in holiness, the internal principle is grace; the external influence is firstly God, Who confers grace, and secondly the many means He has placed at our disposal to aid us in meriting grace. The seed of the spiritual life is implanted in the soul at Baptism. Just as the grain of corn will never develop if it be not placed in the ground and nourished, so the germ of divine life which enters the soul at Baptism will remain undeveloped unless the proper nourishment be afforded it.

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[1] Rt. Rev. E. A. Pace, "Methods of Teaching Religion," Part I (mimeographed), p. 26. Washington, 1927-28.

"The proper and immediate end of Christian education is to co-operate with divine grace in forming the true and perfect Christian, that is, to form Christ Himself in those regenerated by Baptism . . . Christian education takes in the whole aggregate of human life, physical and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic and social, not with a view to reducing it in any way, but in order to elevate, regulate and perfect it, in accordance with the example and teaching of Christ." [2] "The Aim of the Catholic elementary school is to provide the child with those experiences which are calculated to develop in him such knowledge, appreciations, and habits as will yield a character equal to the contingencies of fundamental Christian living in American democratic society." [3] "Religion is the guidance of development along the lines of religious life." [4]

If a school makes no provision in its curriculum for religion, how can the complete development of the individual be effected?

To the Catholic educator this is scarcely a problem, since in a Catholic school religion is the core subject, the integrating principle which holds together all the branches of the curriculum. Whatever disagreement there may be among Catholic educators in regard to specific aims, surely no Catholic educator will deny that the ultimate aim of Catholic education is to prepare the individual for union with God—union in this life in so far as that can be attained under present conditions, and union in eternity which is the direct and inevitable result of fidelity in striving for union in time.

How can educators motivate individuals in such a way that they will seek this union voluntarily? Twenty cen-

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[2] Encyclical Letter of His Holiness, Pius XI, *Christian Education of Youth*, Translation, National Catholic Welfare Conference, pp. 35-36. Washington, 1930.

[3] Rev. George Johnson, "The Aim of the Catholic Elementary School," *Catholic Educational Review*, Vol. XXIII (May, 1925), pp. 257-268.

[4] Rt. Rev. E. A. Pace, opus cit., p. 26.

turies of experimentation bear witness to the fact that the most general means offered by the Church for acquiring this union or, as it is most commonly called, sanctification, is prayer. There are many forms of prayer, but one of the most important, and the one that concerns us chiefly in this study, is spiritual reading. We may define spiritual reading as a certain type of reading, reflection on which tends to bring the subject into close contact with God, directly or indirectly. Directly, if the material is concerned with God Himself, His attributes, power, goodness, etc.; indirectly, if concerned with God's creatures, who, in imitation of Him, led such virtuous lives that they, in very truth, were reflections of God Himself; or with the exposition of certain virtues like humility, mortification, purity, charity, sincerity, etc., which when practiced by the individual for love of God will cause him to become like to God. This is indeed prayer —the elevation of the heart and mind to God through reading.

St. Benedict in his rule makes no provision for formal meditation, the first stage in mental prayer. He did, however, set aside several periods in the day for spiritual reading. "The lack of a definite time to be devoted to meditation such as is prescribed in the rules of the most modern religious communities is due to the fact that spiritual reading in the Benedictine tradition was elevated to meditative prayer. Smaragdus, a holy Abbot of the ninth century, could see no essential difference between prayer and reading, as is shown by the following commentary of his on St. Benedict's Counsel, 'Willingly to listen to holy reading and frequently to devote oneself to prayer.' " (Rule Chap. IV.) [5] "By prayer we are cleansed; by reading we are instructed. Therefore, he who desires to be always with God ought to pray and read frequently. For when we pray, we ourselves speak with God, when we read God speaks with us. For everyone who is perfect in the art of reading

[5] Dom Thomas V. Moore, "The Benedictine Tradition of Prayer," Part II, *The Placidian*, Vol. III, No. 4 (Oct. 1926), p. 245.

proceeds by prayer and meditation. What we do not know we learn by reading; what we learn we store up by meditation and we attain by prayer, that what we have stored up should be carried out by reading. . . . Most fittingly does he (St. Benedict) command us to devote ourselves to prayer, after listening to reading. For prayer does not differ from reading, nor is reading different from prayer." [6]

Spiritual reading, then, aids one in an upward ascent towards sanctification. Through reflective reading on spiritual material the individual comes to know himself, with all his failings; he also sees more clearly his duties to God, to neighbor and to self, and through the light given him in this exercise, he promises God better things in the future. "God asks many a resolution in the time of prayer and we cannot help but make it. And so our prayer gradually works in us a moral and spiritual reformation, for it reveals ourselves to ourselves as we really are and the divine ideal of what we should become, and makes us obedient to the influence of grace which brings us closer and ever closer to the Holiness of God by which we ourselves are sanctified." [7]

Perseverance in the practice of spiritual reading, accompanied by co-operation with God's grace, will assuredly lead to a form of contemplative prayer in which the soul will become closely united with its Maker, desiring only what He desires and willing only what He wills. This is what we mean by union with God, which we believe to be the principal objective in all Catholic education. That teachers in Catholic elementary schools may be directed in aiding pupils to attain this objective more fully, the present investigation was undertaken.

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[6] Commentary on Rule of St. Benedict, Chap. IV, 57. Migne C 11, 784. *Fide* Dom Thomas V. Moore, opus cit., p. 245.

[7] Dom Thomas V. Moore, opus cit., p. 242.

The Purpose

The purpose of this investigation is:

1. To make an experimental study of a sampling of spiritual reading books with a view to formulating a list of books that will be:
   (a) Interesting to children in Grades III to VIII inclusive.
   (b) A means of supplying ideals of conduct to children in the elementary school.
2. To list the desirable and undesirable qualities mentioned by children who read the books selected for study, that they may serve as a suggestion to publishers and authors of how this type of book should be written.

Summary of Previous Studies

The writer has made a careful survey of the literature bearing on the reading interests of children in the elementary schools. A summary [8] of these investigations has been published by the University of Chicago. No study having as its basis the specific type of material used in the present investigation was found. A few studies include *religious* reading among other types, but in almost every case this material had reference to the Bible. We shall summarize the most important empirical studies and shall emphasize the percentage of religious reading as compared with that of other types. There are several investigations of the reading tastes of High School pupils, but since our study is concerned only with the elementary school, we shall limit ourselves to studies carried on in this field.

In October, 1895, Clark Wissler [9] sent the following list of questions to a number of school superintendents in Indi-

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[8] William Scott Gray, "Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading," *Supplementary Educational Monographs*, No. 28, University of Chicago, 1925. Supplements Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

[9] "The Interests of Children in the Reading Work of the Elementary Schools," *Pedagogical Seminary*, V (April, 1898), pp. 523-40.

ana, with a request for written answers from pupils under their charge.

1. Write the subjects of all the lessons that you remember from the Reader you used last year.
2. Which one did you like best? What was it that you liked?
3. If you were taken to a bookstore and told that you might select just one book, what would you take?

Papers were received from 1,950 pupils; 1,060 girls and 890 boys. The children showed greatest preference for lessons that suggested a moral truth, a bit of real life or heroic action. Boys led in the latter. A gradual decline in the life-like is observed with a corresponding gain in the moral, or heroic.

The following types were chosen by preference according to the percentages given, in Grades II, III, IV and V:

Fiction	53.	Religion	5.
Poetry	14.5	Science	2.
Biography	5.5	Humor	.5
Travel	.5	Miscellaneous and Unintelligible	10.
History	7.5		

The percentage of those who chose the religious type in preference to others was only five, a very small proportion as compared with 53 for fiction.

A study [10] of answers received from 101 children in regard to their recollections of matter read was made by Professor Barnes. The interest which the children manifested in the material reported on was interpreted from the above answers. In reference to Bible stories, Barnes says: "Bible stories are separately listed; but here again animals are prominent, the favorites being Daniel's lion, Jonah's whale, and the memorable procession of Noah." If children in the above study derived no more benefit from the reading of

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[10] Earl Barnes, "Study in Reminiscence," *Studies in Education*, Vol. 1, 58-61.

the Bible than the above quotation indicates, it could hardly be considered in this particular instance a medium for spiritual training.

Clara Vostrovsky [11] carried on an investigation of children's reading tastes in the schools of Stockton, California. The material for this investigation was gathered in response to the following questions which were submitted without explanation to all the children of the different schools on the same day and at the same hour so that communication in regard to them was impossible.

1. (a) Do you take books from the Public Library?
   (b) If so, how often?
2. (a) What was the name of your last book?
   (b) Why did you take it?
   (c) How did you like it?

Answers were received from 1,269 children; 604 boys and 665 girls. The following table gives the total percentage of the various types of books drawn:

	Boys	*Girls*
Juvenile	54	49
Fiction	10	26
General Literature	36	25
History and Historical Biography	15	10
Travels	4	3
Science	7	2
Miscellaneous	6	3

Religion is not included in this classification.

In a study [12] of the reading interests of all the pupils in grades above the fifth in the schools of Iowa City, Cedar Rapids and Council Bluffs, the following two questions were asked:

1. About how many books of your own selection have you read since last September?
2. Write the names of ten of those books which you like best, in the order of their preference. If you have not read ten, write the names of those you have read.

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[11] "A Study of Children's Reading Tastes," *Pedagogical Seminary*, VI (December, 1899), pp. 523-35.

[12] Franklin O. Smith, "Pupils Voluntary Reading," *Pedagogical Seminary*, XIV (June, 1907), 208-22.

A list of 29 books represents the "first choice" of 385 boys and 573 girls. In this list the only book that could be called *religious* is *Ben Hur*. There were 120 other books marked "first choice" by boys, but there is not one religious book among them. The girls marked as "first choice" 118 books not included in first list, but not one is religious.

Oscar Tingelstad [13] made a personal investigation of 832 different readers, primers and spellers used in the United States to find out what percentage of the religious element was dropped from these books and when this occurred.

Two methods of investigation were followed:

1. The proportion of religious and semi-religious lessons in these readers was determined.
2. The number of pages containing the name of the Deity or of Christ was noted.

The findings of the author may be summarized as follows in his own words:

(a) *Use of Biblical Material in Readers.* "All the early reading books made copious use of Biblical material; in fact, the function of many of them was frankly to lead into the Bible. The reason the Biblical material has not been wholly eliminated today is found in the fact that there are authors who continue to insert selections from the Bible as literature. *Bible selections are accordingly read in upper grade readers for their literary and not for their religious value.*" [14]

(b) *Material from Catechism.* "The catechism element was common in readers during the early period, was found in a small proportion of the books during the transition period, and disappeared entirely after 1880. The last appearance of the Ten Commandments in books was in 1872. The Apostles' Creed was found in only three volumes after 1800. As a general rule it was considered too sectarian to

[13] "The Religious Element in American School Readers," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, University of Chicago, 1913.

[14] Italics ours.

be incorporated. Not so the Lord's Prayer, even though it comes from the mouth of Jesus Christ. This prayer appeared in readers as late as 1876."

(c) *Christian Moral Maxims.* "In this thesis the moral element in American School Readers has not been distinguished from the religious element. But it must be noted here that it is only in the modern period that the moral and religious elements have been sharply distinguished from each other. The *teacher* is supposed to be the source of moral inspiration today; as for the reading matter, 'every selection should have a meaning, but no selection should have a moral tagged to it.' "

(d) *Theological Dogmas.* "Our modern age professes to have a wholesome fear of everything that savors of 'dogma.' As far as theological dogma is concerned, at least, the readers reflect faithfully the spirit of the times. Theological discussions have been banished from our readers since the time of the Civil War."

(e) *References to God.* "In the early period, children's reading books had some reference to God on nearly every page. The name of the Deity appeared constantly in connection with the many moral precepts as well as in connection with all mention of natural phenomena. As time went on, the mention of God in connection with natural phenomena became less frequent. There is a notable increase in the number of these 'Godless' books after 1880. One is tempted to make the generalization that this increase is due to the rise of the scientific tendency, the promulgation and wide acceptance of evolutionary theory, and the influence of modern child psychology."

"God is believed by orthodox Christians to be a Triune God. The readers make frequent mention of God the Father, much less frequent mention of Jesus Christ, and probably do not mention the Holy Ghost over a dozen times in the course of a century."

(f) *References to Christ.* "In the great majority of readers in which Christ is mentioned He is named only once,

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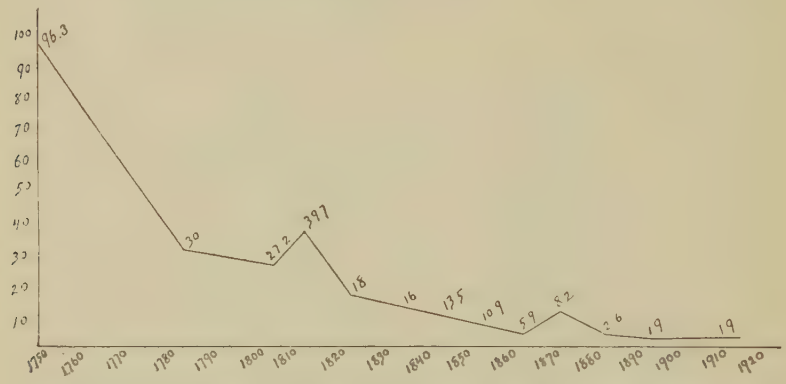
sometimes not in a religious connection. It used to be the universal practice to mention His name in connection with Christmas, at least; but several modern readers find it perfectly natural to devote several pages to Christmas stories and Christmas trees and Christmas bells, and so forth, without mentioning the name of Christ Himself. Santa Claus is commonly the Christmas hero."

The gradual disappearace of the religious element may also be shown by the following graph:



Willis L. Uhl [15] conducted a series of investigations for the purpose of studying the content of elementary school reading courses with a view to formulating plans for improving it. This general purpose includes the following minor ones:

1. The elimination of unsuitable reading material.
2. The detection of superior reading material.
3. The accurate placement of this superior material.

The following methods were employed in securing the data:

Reactions to basal reading matter,

(a) From teachers. Questionnaires containing questions on content of basal readers and informational literature and classified lists of selections for comments.

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[15] *Scientific Determination of the Content of the Elementary School Course in Reading.* University of Chicago Libraries, Chicago, 1921.

(b) From pupils. Direct presentation of representative selections and informational literature to children to find out whether they were liked or disliked by them.

Uhl gives the results of his findings from both methods in Table XVII, page 79, where he presents a graded list of 236 superior selections. We do not find any titles bearing on religion in this list. In Table XIX, page 85, he presents the types of selections for the various grades. Again, the religious type is not included. In Grades VII and VIII we find the word *supernatural,* but the selections classed under this are *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.*

If religious reading does occur in any of the readers studied in this investigation it did not receive a large enough number of votes to warrant its appearing in the final lists.

An inquiry [16] was made by Doctor Dunn into the reading interests of children in first, second and third grades. The data were selected from 29 Primary Reading Books. The total number of selections found was 1,043; the number of different titles was 749. The types of material and the number of selections under each follow:

	No.		No.
Aesop and Other Fables...	86	Legend and Myth.....	31
Bible Stories	4	Miscellaneous Stores	121
Biographical and Historical	31	Miscellaneous Poems	321
Geographical	5	Mother Goose	119
Observations of Bird and Animal Life	2	Rossett's Poems	42
Folk and Fairy Tales.....	230	Stevenson's Poems	51

We note here only four Bible Stories, hardly .4% of the total number.

In an investigation [17] conducted by Grant and White of the choices of 600 children for certain types of reading ma-

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[16] Fannie Wyche Dunn, *Interest Factors in Primary Reading Material,* Columbia University Contribution to Education, No. 113, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1921.

[17] Emma B. Grant and Margaret L. White, "A Study of Children's Choices of Reading Materials," *Teachers' College Record,* XXVI (April, 1925), pp. 671-78.

terial, we find the following classification with the percentages for each type given:

Animal	23.9	Historical	4.4
Fairy	20.	Children's Experiences	4.1
Folk-lore	17.4	Bible	1.5
Poetry	10.8	Nature	1.1
Miscellaneous	8.9	Fables	1.1
Informational	6.3	Humor	.5

The percentage given to the choices of children for the Bible—1.5—compares unfavorably with those assigned to animal, fairy, folk-lore, poetry, informational, historical and children's experiences.

An extensive study [18] of children's interests in reading was made by Arthur M. Jordan. A large part of his data was gathered when he visited eight public libraries, six in New York City and two outside of New York, and noted the books withdrawn by children. He also received returns from two questionnaires, one sent to schools in Arkansas, Kansas and Washington, D. C., and the other to the schools of Charlotte and Greensboro, N. C. Dr. Jordan presents the attitude of children to 40,000 books and magazines. He tells us that both boys and girls show a very large interest in fiction in comparison with that shown in other types. Girls like fiction best of all. Boys place it second only to adventure. There is an increasing interest in fiction in both boys and girls from 9 to 19 years. The types of literature mentioned by Jordan are:

Fiction (adult, juvenile)	Science
Adventure	Travel
Biography	Information
History	Humor
Poetry	Miscellaneous

Religion is not included in this classification. The reason for this may be, not that there are no religious books in the libraries that were made objects of special study in this investigation, but rather because the books of this type that

[18] Arthur M. Jordan, *Children's Interests in Reading*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N. C., 1926.

were in these libraries were not written in a manner to engage the interests of children.

Lewis M. Terman [19] and Margaret Lima report on a study conducted by them of the reading tastes of 2,000 children. The following types of reading were selected by preference:

Fairy Tales, Folk Tales and Legends.
Nature and Animal Stories.
History, Biography and Travel.
Science.
Stories of Adventure or Mystery.
Stories of Home and School Life.
Poetry and Drama.
Children's Encyclopedias.
Informational Fiction, Including the Classics.
Emotional Fiction.

Religion is not found in this classification. Even the Bible is not mentioned.

On pages [20] 95 to 256 inclusive we find a number of books listed under certain general headings, and on pages 257 to 267 inclusive of the same volume we find a graded list of books to be used as supplementary reading by pupils in the elementary schools. The authors, however, do not tell on what criteria they based the selection of these books. In suggested readings there are 160 pages of Bibliography, three of which are devoted to Bible Stories and Lives of Christ, twenty-two of the former and four of the latter. The total number of books in the graded list is 214 and among these are only two that might be considered *religious*. These are: *Bible Stories* in Grade III and *A Life of Joan of Arc,* Grade IV. The authors state as their reason for preparing the graded list the following: "Because of the difficulty which many principals and teachers have in selecting reading material for their pupils." [21]

The proportion of religious books as compared with other types in this study is very small.

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[19] *Children's Reading,* New York, D. Appleton and Company, 1926.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid. p. 257.

By far the greatest experiment [22] in children's reading interests was conducted by the Winnetka Seminar Teachers under the direction of Carleton Washburne and Mabel Vogel. The reactions of 36,750 children were secured to 700 books. Twenty-five or more children's judgments were obtained on each book. These children were located in thirty-four cities scattered from Georgia and Rhode Island on the east to New Mexico and Montana on the west. Eight hundred teachers co-operated. The result of this study was a Graded List of Books ranging from Grades III to X inclusive.

A study of the seven hundred books on the list reveals the fact that only three can be classified under the religious type. These are: *Old Stories of the East,* by Baldwin, and "A Story of Joan of Arc," in *Heroes of the Nations,* by Alshouse, both in Grade V, and *Ben Hur* in Grades VII and IX.

The reading tastes of Negro children in eleven elementary and four Junior High Schools in Kansas City, Kansas, was made a matter of investigation [23] by S. D. Scruggs. There were 669 boys and 786 girls, ranging in ages from 8 to 16, included in the study.

From the expressed judgments of the children themselves, the most interesting stories were classified by teachers for a questionnaire, which was later submitted to pupils. Thirteen stories representing twelve clear-cut types comprised the first section of the questionnaire. The pupils were instructed to read through each story, indicate the type of story they had read, and whether or not they liked it. The interest displayed in the various types of stories is shown by the percentages given:

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[22] Carleton Washburne and Mabel Vogel, *The Winnetka Graded Book List,* Chicago, Rand McNally and Company, 1926.

[23] P. A. Witty and S. D. Scruggs, "Reading Interests of Negro Children," *Bulletin of Education,* University of Kansas (December, 1926), Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 7-11.

	Boys	*Girls*		*Boys*	*Girls*
Bible Stories	83	89	Adventure	67	46
Lives of People	66	67	Fairy and Myth	49	68
Travel	59	69	Bedtime	51	63
Animal Life	68	60	Funny	71	76
Plant Life	45	55	Sad	22	31
How to Make Things	69	68	Information	53	50

It is particularly significant that the Bible Stories rank first among the various types given. This is the only study that shows such a high percentage in Bible Stories and seems to offer an additional proof that children can be interested in the religious type of reading.

A committee of which Danylu Belser,[24] State Supervisor of Primary Education, Montgomery, Alabama, was chairman, carried on an investigation of the reading interests of boys.

In gathering the material the committee chose five lines of procedure:

1. The investigation of available literature on the subject.
2. The visiting of six libraries where conferences were held with librarians and surveys of reading materials and personal observations of children's readings were made.
3. The sending out of a questionnaire, answers to which were received from 112 boys and 125 girls enrolled in grades four to twelve inclusive.
4. A survey of the reading interests of German, French and Italian children.
5. An inquiry into the influence of illustrations upon reading interests.

Conclusions derived from this study: The major interests of boys from ten to thirteen are in four general types of fiction. These are books concerned with: (1) War and scouting; (2) schools and sports; (3) boy scouts; (4) strenuous adventure.

Religion is not found in this classification.

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[24] Danylu Belser, "The Reading Interests of Boys," *Elementary English Review*, III (November, 1926), pp. 292-96.

Henriette R. Walter [25] sums up the reports of forty-seven librarians in the following types of material that girls found interesting:

- Juvenile Fiction
- Fiction
  - Standard
  - Mediocre
  - Pernicious
- Adventure and Mystery
- Poetry
- Biography and History
- Humor
- Travel
- Drama
- Fairy Tales
- All Other Types

The religious type is not included.

Miriam Blanton Huber [26] in her experiment selected for study the following types:

- A. Familiar Experience
- B. Unusual Experience
- C. Humor
- D. Fancy
- E. Information
- F. Heroism and Service

She found the following elements present in the types studied:

- surprise
- plot
- fancy
- action
- animals
- play
- adventure
- heroes
- home life
- kindliness
- service
- information
- humor

Religious reading is not drawn on in this study.

Herbert B. Bruner [27] reports an experiment in reading carried on with a view to the preparation and selection of reading materials measuring up to the twofold standard of interest and appropriateness. Questions in the fields of civics, elementary science and nature study, geography, history, hygiene, industrial arts and safety education were

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[25] *Girl Life in America, A Study of Backgrounds*, pp. 117-37, New York, The National Committee for the Study of Juvenile Reading (1 Madison Ave.), 1927.

[26] *The Influence of Intelligence upon Children's Reading Interests*, Teachers College, Columbia University Contributions to Education, No. 312, 1928.

[27] "Determining Basic Reading Materials through a Study of Children's Interests and Adult Judgments," *Teachers' College Record*, XXX (January, 1929), pp. 285-309.

submitted to 12,000 fourth, fifth and sixth grade pupils. From the answers received to these questions a recommended list of reading materials for Grades IV, V and VI was prepared. The types included informational and literary. Religion is not referred to specifically, nor is there anything to indicate that it was included in the study.

The following table will show the percentage of religious reading in each of the sixteen empirical studies reviewed:

TABLE I

	Year	*Percent*
Wissler	1898	5.
Barnes	1898	0.
Vostrovsky	1899	0.
Smith	1907	3.
Tingelstad	1913	96.3 in 1750
	-	1.9 in 1912
Uhl		0.
Dunn		.4
Grand and White		1.5
Jordan	1926	0.
Terman and Lima	1926	0.
Washburne and Vogel	1926	.4
Scruggs	1926	86.
Belser	1926	0.
Walker	1927	0.
Huber	1928	0.
Bruner	1929	0.

An examination of the above table shows clearly that religious reading occupied a very insignificant place among the types studied. Tingelstad's figures show the gradual elimination of the religious element from readers between 1750 and 1912. Uhl's study in 1921, which had as its basis the reading material of the elementary schools, contains no religious reading whatever. Of the studies that follow, the only significant percentage is that which appears in Scruggs' study of Negro children. This was the result of the direct presentation of Bible Stories to groups of these children.

Terman and Lima in their suggested list of supplementary reading give twenty-two *Bible Stories* and four *Lives of Christ*, but these were not empirically selected. The same is true of the few religious books mentioned in their graded list of books.

Jordan reviews nearly twenty studies that preceded his investigation, but among these are only six that concern themselves with the elementary schools. These are: Russell and Bullock,[28] Henderson,[29] Vostrovsky,[31] Shaw,[30] Wissler,[32] Irving[33] and Smith.[34]

Jordan sums up his observations on the studies reviewed as follows:

"Among the reports which have been reviewed in this chapter there is found much divergency as to the literary quality of the choices and the proportion of so-called 'serious' books chosen. In general, the form of the inquiries favors the record of 'better' and more 'serious' reading, and different studies differ in this.

In some matters there is substantial agreement. Both boys and girls read more fiction than anything else and like it better. In nine cases out of ten girls read more fiction than boys. . . . The interest of girls in travel, adventure, and science is almost negligible. Boys often show a real liking for history, sometimes as early as grade four. Many boys give history as first choice. They display very little interest in books on travel or science, though more than

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[28] J. E. Russell and R. W. Bullock, "Some Observations of Children's Reading," N. E. A. Proceedings, 1897, pp. 1015-21.

[29] H. C. Henderson, "Report on Child Reading," *Report of the Department of Public Instruction of New York*, II, 978-91 (1897).

[30] J. C. Shaw, "Children's Reading," *Pedagogical Seminary*, October, 1897.

[31] Clara Vostrovsky, opus cit.

[32] Clark Wissler, opus cit.

[33] A. P. Irving, "Home Reading of School Children," *Pedagogical Seminary*, VII (April, 1900), pp. 138-40.

[34] F. O. Smith, opus cit.

the girls. With increasing age, preferences for juvenile fiction give way to preferences for adult fiction, and preferences for poetry increase."

Alice Minor Curley [35] made an analysis of the methods used in investigating children's reading. In her summary of the reading investigations which she analyzed and which include a number of elementary school studies,[36] she classifies the following types in the order of their rank in interest:

AGE 6—7

Boys	*Girls*
Fairy Tales	Fairy Tales
Poetry of the Mother Goose Type	Juvenile Fiction
Juvenile Fiction	Information
	History
	Religion (Bible Stories)

AGE 8

Fairy Tales	Fairy Tales
Poetry	Juvenile Fiction
Juvenile Fiction	Poetry
Religion	Religion (second with Wissler)
(Wissler, Grant and White)	History
Science or Information	Biography
Biography	Science
History	
Humor	
Travel	

[35] "An Analysis of the Methods Used in Investigating Children's Reading Interests and a Summary of the Findings," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, Yale University, 1928.

[36] (a) H. V. Coryall, "What Books Do Boys Recommend to Each Other?", *Outlook*, XXXI (August 16, 1922), 645-6. (b) Fannie W. Dunn, opus cit. (c) Jennie Lind Green, "When Children Read for Fun," *School and Society*, XVI (November 25, 1922), 614-16. (d) Arthur M. Jordan, opus cit. (e) James Russell and R. W. Bullock, opus cit. (f) Margaret M. Stroh, *Literature for Grades VII, VIII and IX*, New York, Columbia University, 1926, Teachers College Contributions to Education, No. 232. (g) Lewis M. Terman and Margaret Lima, opus cit. (h) M. B. True, "What My Pupils Read," *Education X* (September, 1889), 42-45, and XIV (October, 1893), 99-102. (i) Willis L. Uhl, opus cit. (j) Clara Vostrovsky, opus cit. (k) Carleton Washburne and Mabel Vogel, opus cit. (l) Clark Wissler, opus cit.

AGE 9

Boys	*Girls*	
Juvenile Fiction	Juvenile Fiction	
Fairy Tales	Fairy Tales	
Juvenile Stories of Adventure	Short Stories	
Poetry	Poetry	
Biography	Biography	Rank much lower than with boys.
Information	History	
History	Science	
Religion (Wissler, Grant and White)	Adventure	
	Information	
Travel and Humor	Humor	A little more interest than with boys.
	Religion	

AGE 10

Juvenile Fiction of Adventure	Junvenile Fiction	
Biography	Poetry	
History	Biography	
Science	History	
Information	Travel	
Travel and Humor	Science	Practically negligible.
Religion (fairly constant in giving a slight pleasure)	Information	
	Humor	

AGE 11

Juvenile Fiction	Juvenile	
Adventure	Short Stories	
Poetry	Fairy Tales	
Biography	Adventure	
Travel	Poetry	
History	Biography	
Science	History	
Humor	Travel	Lost some interest.
Science	Science	
Religion	Religion (ranks low with Wissler)	

AGE 12

Juvenile Fiction of Adventure	Juvenile Fiction	
Poetry	Short Stories	
Biography	Fairy Tales	
History	Adult Fiction	
Travel	Poetry	
Science	History	Slight interest.
Informational	Biography	
	Travel	
	Humor	Hold but a very slight interest.
	Information	
	Religion	

AGE 13

Boys		*Girls*
Juvenile Fiction		Juvenile Fiction
Poetry		Adult Fiction
Biography		Poetry
Short Stories		Biography and History
Information		Travel
History		Science
Religion, Travel, Science	Practically negligible.	Information

AGE 14

Juvenile Fiction		Juvenile Fiction
Adventure		Adult Fiction
Poetry		Poetry
Adult Fiction		Biography
Biography		History
History		Travel
Travel		Science
Short Stories		Humor
Information		Adventure
Humor, Religion	Almost negligible.	Information (entirely negligible)
Essays		Religion, Essays — Almost entirely negligible.

The above outline shows the place occupied by religion at each age. The only favorable position is that under age 8, where it was given second place by Wissler. As girls and boys advance in age, religion seems to lose interest for them, according to Curley's findings.

We feel that the studies reviewed in this chapter cover quite thoroughly the literature on the reading interests of children in the elementary schools. It is a rather sad commentary on the results of our teaching up to the present time that religion, which should prove such a vital force in the life of every individual, is represented by such a low percentage in actual practice, as proven by the findings of so many investigations.

With the advance in years, we should expect to find children manifesting an increased interest in religious reading in order to prepare themselves for the changes that usually occur during the period of adolescence. A few words in

regard to this important time in the life of a child might not be out of place here.

Adolescence

Since many children enter the adolescent stage before leaving the elementary school, it seems fitting that careful preparation for meeting this crisis be made. In our estimation, motivating children to become interested in spiritual reading would constitute a very worthy preparation for this period. The reading of spiritual material that has been wisely selected by one competent to judge—both of the reading and the character of the reader—will soon lead a soul very close to God. In these dispositions we can readily believe that an individual will set up very high ideals and, by the consistent practice of the little acts which grow out of striving to realize those ideals, he will soon acquire many virtues.

Psychologists who have conducted experiments in child study tell us that marked changes characterize the personality of individuals at adolescence; also that this period begins at a definite point, puberty, and ends at various stages in the lives of individuals. "It is the custom to regard puberty as the index of the beginning of adolescence." [37] "When the age of puberty arrives sensory curiosity does not long exert an isolated influence. . . . It becomes more or less complicated by sexual curiosity. Motor activity and the mere exercise of the senses for their own sake become relatively tame and tiresome. Tops, marbles, jumping ropes, roller skates lose much of their former zest. Talks, walks, dances have an attraction never before experienced." [38] "Adolescence is the period during which the growing boy ceases to be a child and becomes an adult . . . It is the period when the boy's character very frequently takes its final

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[37] E. D. Starbuck, *Psychology of Religion*, p. 195, New York, Scribner's Sons, 1900.

[38] Dom Thomas V. Moore, O.S.B. *Dynamic Psychology*, p. 170, Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1926.

form. Delinquency statistics prove that most criminal careers can be traced back to adolescence and the well-known studies of Starbuck show that when deeply religious people are able to date the inception of their devout lives to a particularly spiritual crisis that crisis is apt to occur during the same period. The adult saint or sinner is apt to be such because he was a saintly or sinful adolescent." [39] "Adolescence is, in some respects, the most interesting period from the standpoint of religious development as from every other point of view." [40] "Back of the whole adolescent development, and central to it, is the birth of a new and larger spiritual consciousness.[41]

"At fourteen girls already prefer adult books and fairly steep themselves at this age in sentimental fiction. They often read as many as six or seven novels a week, and all life takes on a tinge of romance. They live the lives of their heroines and are likely to imbibe many false ideas of reality. . . . An abundance of good literature should be provided for the girl at this period, or she is almost certain to fall into deplorable habits. At fifteen her reading habits are practically formed." [42] "It is no less necessary to direct and watch the education of the adolescent, soft as wax to be molded into vice, in whatever other environment he may happen to be, removing occasions of evil and providing occasions for good." [43]

From the above quotations one can readily see that this period in the life of a child demands serious consideration on the part of educators, particularly from the standpoint of religious training. That adolescent children have specific needs, no one will deny. The nature of these needs, however, is far from being clear because of the lack of em-

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[39] Rev. Paul Hanly Furfey, *The Growing Boy*, pp. 130-131, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1930.

[40] E. D. Starbuck, opus cit., p. 195.

[41] Ibid., p. 252.

[42] Lewis M. Terman and Margaret Lima, opus cit., pp. 43-44.

[43] Encyclical Letter of His Holiness, Pius XI, *Christian Education of Youth*, p. 34, Translation by National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, 1930.

pirical data. Catholic psychologists have here a broad field for experimentation, and we trust that the next few years will see the inauguration of a series of studies that is needed to throw light on this too little understood subject.

Several important investigations have been made in order to determine, if possible, what ideals children form at the period of adolescence. There are also some reported studies on religious conversion. We shall summarize a few of the former and three of the latter merely to indicate some of the findings of these experiments in regard to two major factors that influence so many people in leading exemplary lives—the formation of worthy ideals and the turning of one's whole being to the service of religion.

Will Grant Chambers [44] reports a number of studies that have been made of the ideals of children. He himself made such a study in New Castle, Pennsylvania. He found that only about 2.7 per cent equally divided between the sexes express themselves as wishing to be like God or Christ, the latter being more often named. Bible characters are named by less than 5 per cent, nearly all being girls.

Miss Estelle M. Darrah's [45] study, confined almost entirely to Minnesota children, found 5 per cent of the children, chiefly below the age of 12, to name God and Christ as ideals. Professor Earl Barnes,[46] in his study of New Jersey children, gives 4 per cent of each sex as the proportion choosing Deity, while not a single individual named a Bible character. Mr. A. Young, Esq.,[47] found that 7 per cent of the boys and 13 per cent of the girls in Edinburgh schools longed to be like the Deity. There was, however, a marked falling off in both sexes after the age of 11. Christ was named three times as often as God by the Scottish children.

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[44] "The Evolution of Ideals," *Pedagogical Seminary* X (1903), pp. 101-143.

[45] "A Study of Children's Ideals," *Popular Science Monthly*, LIII (May, 1898), 88-98.

[46] "Children's Ideals," *Pedagogical Seminary*, VII (April, 1900), 3-12.

[47] "Report on 'Children's Ideals' Test," *Practical Teacher*, London, 1900.

Four per cent, chiefly girls, named Bible characters as ideals. Mr. Young comments on this study, "It is remarkable that the many admirable characters of the Bible exert so little influence on the development of character. We would expect Joshua, David, Samuel, Samson, Ruth, Esther, Vashte to compete successfully with any characters of life or literature if children were brought to know them. And yet we know that four times as many characters are chosen from fiction and mythology as from the Bible."

Henry H. Goddard [48] made a study of Göttingen children. His chief motive was to find out what influence instruction in religion has on children's ideals.

Prussia prescribes three hours a week for two years and four hours a week for five years for this instruction. He found that 7 per cent of the boys and 15 per cent of the girls selected God, Jesus and Bible characters as ideals. In a similar study conducted in London it was shown that 7 per cent of the boys and 18 per cent of the girls chose as ideals God, Jesus and Bible characters. In London one-half as much school time is devoted to the Bible as in Göttingen, and yet those in the former study equal the choices of the boys and surpass those of the girls. Dr. Goddard says, "That the difference between London and Göttingen in this respect may be a difference in emphasis or method of instruction is perhaps indicated by the fact that the Göttingen study shows many more Bible heroes and fewer choices of Jesus. The German studies are unique in the number of Bible characters."

In an inquiry [49] into the amount and kind of reading done by pupils in the High Schools of Iowa City and Fort Dodge, Iowa, the pupils were asked to name two or three characters about whom they had read in history, literature or elsewhere whom they would wish to be like. The returns

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[48] "Ideals of a Group of German Children," *Pedagogical Seminary*, XII (1906), pp. 215-16.

[49] Mrs. Roxanna E. Anderson, "A Preliminary Study of the Reading Tastes of High School Pupils," *Pedagogical Seminary*, XIX (December, 1912), pp. 438-60.

included papers from 588 High School pupils distributed as follows: Freshman, 218; Sophomore, 158; Junior, 107; and Senior, 105.

There was little difference between the average amount of all reading done by boys and girls. The following types of stories were chosen by preference:

Travel	Ghosts
Great Men and Women	Detective Stories
About Science	War
Adventure	How to Make Things
Love	

The characters named fell into the three following groups with the percentages as given:

	Boys	Girls
1. Historic or public	85.	35.
2. From fiction	15.	64.
3. Religious	.2	.4

The investigator remarks, "It is indeed disappointing to note that the many admirable characters of the Bible exert so little influence in the lives of adolescents. The fact that less than 1 per cent of either boys or girls in the present study mention Bible characters confirms the occasion for concern so generally felt with respect to the lack of knowledge of and interest in the Bible as literature."

Through answers to a questionnaire submitted to 176 third and fourth year pupils in the Central High School, Syracuse, N. Y., H. T. Eaton [50] discovered that 100 per cent did voluntary reading of some sort. One hundred per cent of boys and 98 per cent of girls read books and magazines. Eighty-five per cent of boys and 83 per cent of girls read daily newspapers. Some read less than five books, others from 200 to 300.

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[50] "What High School Pupils Like to Read," *Education*, XLIII (1922), pp. 204-209.

The following table shows in percentages the general popularity of various types:

	Boys	*Girls*
Fiction	100	98
Essays and Travel	51	34
Poetry	38	63
History	40	26
Biography	54	58
Science	51	9
Religion	26	42

Professor Eaton says: "It is a fair estimate to say that a person reading 50 books a year reads 30 in fiction. The most common answer to the question in regard to religion was, 'I read the Bible during the year.'" If the percentage in the above table, 26 per cent of the boys and 42 per cent of the girls, who selected religious reading as their preferences—are interpreted in the light of the above answer, "I read the Bible during the year," very little reliance can be placed on these percentages, because some may have read it only once in the whole year. While Professor Eaton doesn't say anything about the ideals which children formed from the above reading, we can safely conclude that the majority were not based on religion.

In a comparatively exhaustive study of the moral development of children, McGrath [51] discovered that certain principles of conduct make their appearance at various stages in the development of children.

The following table illustrates the various ages at which children recognize moral implications. Unless specified these are the same for boys and girls.

6—7	
Respect for Authority	Respect for Elders
Charity	To Be Polite
Unselfishness	Worship
Duty to Help Mother	Stealing

[51] Marie Cecilia McGrath, *A Study of the Moral Development of Children*, p. 164, Psychological Monograph, Vol. XXXII, No. 2, Whole No. 144, Washington, 1923.

8—9

Religious Obligations
To Be Moral
Courtship
Marital Infidelity
Love of Mother
Obligation to Restore Stolen Goods
To Be Honorable
Right of Mob Rule
Aim of Life—True Happiness
Indissolubility of Marriage (girls)
Necessity of Justice (boys)
Stealing (shoplifting), (girls)
Stealing (pickpocketing)
Gambling
Murder
Parental Love

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Duty in Time of War
Sovereign Power Belongs to State Alone
Indissolubility of Marriage (boys)
Divorce (boys)
Necessity of Justice (girls)
Purity
Stealing (shoplifting), (boys)

11—12

Regard for Conventions Guarding Sex
Appreciation of Sex Differences

The author made use of a number of pictures and stories to determine the extent of the subject's conception of the moral element contained in them. Of the results of these she says: "The knowledge of the moral principles involved in the stories and the ability to apply them in the situation presented is shown to increase as we approach the adult age. . . . As his experiences become greater, the development of the child is apparent, but we have no evidence that he forgets or loses a moral principle once instilled in his mind. The mechanism of the child's mind, having been attuned to a moral principle, is thrown into action at once with the presence of circumstances involving this principle."

E. D. Starbuck [51a] reports an empirical investigation of the mental and spiritual processes at work during religious conversion in approximately 1,500 cases, chiefly Protestants. Dr. Starbuck says that religious conversion is "characterized by more or less sudden changes of character from evil to goodness, from sinfulness to righteousness, and from indifference to spiritual insight and activity." [52] He defines the process "as the whole series of manifestations just pre-

[51a] *Psychology of Religion*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900.
[52] Ibid., p. 21.

ceding, accompanying and immediately following the apparently sudden changes of character involved." [52a] He makes a distinction between spontaneous religious awakening and conversion. He found the average age of the former to be 13.7 years for females, and 16.3 years for males. He says conversions occur a year later. He also speaks of a third stage in religious development as sanctification, "which in its usual designation is regarded as a special act of the Holy Spirit, by which one is, in a peculiar way, freed from sin, and set apart for a holy life." [53] Starbuck found that the greatest number of conversions occur between the ages of 13 and 20, which coincides very closely with the age for adolescence as given by a majority of psychologists. He cites the following ideals as influencing people in various ways:

Helpfulness to others	Self-perfection
Harmony with God	Self-expression
To love and serve God	To know
	Self-interest
Christ	Self-abnegation
	Specific virtues

Since Dr. Starbuck's subjects represented a very specialized class—Protestants—he says that he is not sure that we can interpret the results to apply similarly to Catholics, Jews, statesmen, savages, etc.[54] Dr. Elmer T. Clarke,[55] in a study which he made of the religious development of 2,174 men and women, found that 6.7 per cent had been converted, 27.2 per cent had experienced some sort of emotional awakening, while 66.1 per cent had developed gradually. He accounts for the latter by the fact that people who attend Sunday School regularly as children, experi-

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[52a] Ibid., p. 21.
[53] Ibid., p. 375.
[54] Ibid., p. 13.
[55] *The Psychology of Religious Awakening*, New York, Macmillan Co., 1929.

ence no religious awakening. Dr. Clarke thinks if churches could induce non-churchgoers to attend church at regular intervals, the percentage of those who experience religious awakening would be raised.

Another important finding of Dr. Clarke was that thorough and consistent religious training in youth influences religious development.

Professor Sante de Sanctis [56] made a study of religious conversion in which the subjects represented were mainly converts to Catholicism or certain baptized Catholics who, having been instructed in the faith while young, had either fallen away from the church, and eventually returned, or else had led careless, worldly lives for a time and later became devout Catholics. Among the former were St. Paul, Manzoni, Cardinal Newman, Hermann Ronge (Johannes Joergensen), and Ratisbonne; among the latter, St. Augustine, St. Francis of Assisi, the Polish philosopher Lutoslawski, besides some personal acquaintances whose cases he studied closely. De Sanctis defines conversion as a process of religious growth leading to sanctification. However, he attempts to explain the process apart from grace. He says that everything that exists in the sub-conscious mind, as well as everything we consciously think or perform, is charged with psychic activity. Our past experiences seethe in the sub-conscious.

He believes that the so-called fulminant conversions are not such in reality, but have been caused by a series of incidents stored up in the sub-conscious mind of the subject, influencing him even though he is not consciously aware of it. He maintains that while conversions are not to be restricted exclusively to Catholicism, since they occur in all religions, even in paganism, he believes that the Catholic religion conduces to religious growth to a far greater extent than does any other religion.

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[56] *Religious Conversion*, London, Kegan Paul, French, Trubner & Co., 1927; Translation by Helen Augur, New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1927.

Conclusion

The foregoing studies yield evidence in plenty to prove that at least for children there is a dearth of the type of reading designated spiritual as understood and defined in this study. The only religious reading mentioned in any of the studies is the *Bible*, *A Life of Joan of Arc*, and *Ben Hur*, and these are represented by a relatively low percentage in all the studies. The same may be said of the characters selected as ideals. Those who chose God, Christ or a Bible character as an ideal, compare very unfavorably with those who selected characters from other types of reading.

We believe that Lives of Christ, and His Blessed Mother, Lives of the Saints, Biographies of men and women who have striven to extend the Kingdom of Christ on earth and books of interesting instructional, mystical and allegorical types can be used as media for character training which will act as more powerful stimuli in effecting this great objective than the types suggested in Starbuck and Shuttleworth's, "A Guide to Literature for Character Training." [57] The types they mention are: folk-stories, fables, fairy tales, myths, legends, hero stories, romance cycles and literary fairy tales and fantasies. We do not deny the value of these for conveying certain moral lessons, but we feel that these same lessons can be brought home much more effectively through the medium of spiritual reading.

If a conversional crisis occurs in the lives of many individuals, as Dr. Starbuck's findings show, then spiritual reading will prepare the individual for it and will enable him to bridge the gap between youth and maturity. If gradual development results in the case of those who have received sound religious instruction in childhood, as Dr. Clarke found to be the case, then one of the most powerful means of promoting this is spiritual reading. If the experiences of the individual are stored up in the sub-conscious mind to be released when acted upon by certain stimuli, as

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[57] New York, The Macmillan Co., 1928.

Professor de Sanctis believes, how many vital experiences may become a part of the capital of any individual through spiritual reading, and how often may not spiritual reading be itself the stimulus that causes these stored-up experiences to react upon the individual in such a way that a conversional crisis results? We can agree with Professor de Sanctis when he maintains that conversions take place in the manner he describes, but we part company with him when he refuses to admit that this process is the work of grace. God, the Efficient Cause of all things, operates in every act more than does the secondary cause. In the case of man, however, He respects the free will that He Himself has bestowed upon him gratuitiously. When man exercises this free will by co-operating with God's action, which is grace, conversion (religious development leading to sanctification) is bound to result. "But what is worse is the claim, not only vain, but false, to submit to research, experiment and conclusions of a purely natural and profane order, those matters of education which belong to the supernatural order; as . . . in general the secret workings of grace which indeed elevate the natural powers, but are infinitely superior to them, and may nowise be subjected to physical laws, for 'the Spirit breatheth where He will.' "

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[58] Encyclical Letter of His Holiness, Pius XI, *Christian Education of Youth*, Translation, National Catholic Welfare Conference, p. 25, Washington, 1930.

CHAPTER II

Technique and Procedure

In order to obtain an adequate idea of which type of spiritual reading, among those at present available, possesses the strongest interest value for pupils in our elementary schools, it was necessary to place at the disposal of definite groups of children samples of these types. The problem was presented to the most representative Catholic Publishing Houses, as well as to a few not distinctly Catholic, and their co-operation solicited. They were asked to send to the writer the books they deemed most satisfactory for spiritual reading for pupils in grades three to eight inclusive. Juvenile literature was preferred, but since there was believed to be a dearth of this particular type it was thought advisable to include a fair sampling of any adult literature which, in the opinion of the publishers, might be adapted to this purpose. In response to this appeal, one hundred and forty books, which were to form the basis of this study, were placed at the disposal of the writer.

The next step was to ascertain the grades in which these books could be read and appreciated most profitably from the standpoint of structure. In the Elementary School Journal for January, 1928,[1] there was published an objective method for determining the grade placement of children's reading material. The technique adhered to and described in this article was developed by the Winnetka Teachers' Seminar, composed of twenty volunteer teachers under the direction of Mabel Vogel, Director of Research Office, Public Schools, Winnetka, Illinois, and Carleton Washburne, Superintendent of Schools, Winnetka, Illinois.

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[1] C. Washburne and Mabel Vogel, "An Objective Method for Determining the Grade Placement of Children's Reading Material," *Elementary School Journal*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 5 (Jan. 1928), pp. 373-381.

The basis of this technique was furnished by the intensive and statistical study of one hundred and fifty books chosen from the Winnetka Graded Book List, which is a list of seven hundred books on each of which twenty-five or more children's judgments were secured. The list is graded not according to the actual grades of the children who reported on them, but according to the reading ability of each as evidenced by the score received on the Paragraph Meaning Section of the Stanford Achievement Test.

Technique for Grading Books

1. Make a sampling of 1,000 words from the book as follows:

   (a) Determine the number of pages in the book.

   (b) Determine the number of words per line by counting the number of words in ten lines scattered through the book and dividing by 10.

   (c) Divide 1,000 (the number of words needed) by the number of words per line. For example, if there are eight words per line, item c will be 1,000 divided by 8, or 125, the number of pages from which sample lines are to be chosen.

   (d) Divide the number of pages in the book (for example, 432) by the number of pages from which samples are to be chosen (for example, 125). In the example given, the quotient is 3.5. Therefore, the sample lines will be taken from every third page.

   (e) Copy on a separate card (cards cut 2 inches by 3 inches are a convenient size) every word from the top line (or any other given line) of every page to be sampled. Put a p in the corner of each card containing a word used as a preposition.

   (f) After copying the words from a given line on the number of pages estimated in c, count the cards. If there is not an even thousand, discard any excess, or add cards by copying words from additional lines until an exact thousand is reached.

   (g) Arrange the cards in strictly alphabetical order so that all duplicates of any given word come together. Eliminate all duplicate cards, writing the total number of such cards on the one card that remains. For example, if there are thirty cards containing the word "the," write the number 30 on one "the" card and discard the other cards containing this word.

2. Count the cards after the duplicates have been eliminated, thus obtaining the number of different words in 1,000. Call this number X_2.

3. Count the total number of prepositions in the 1,000 words. If the preposition "in," for example, occurs fifteen times, it should count as fifteen prepositions. Record the total number of prepositions as X_3.

4. Check each word card with Thorndike's word list. Count the total number of words, including duplicates, which do not occur in Thorndike's list. In this connection it must be remembered that derived forms of words included in the Thorndike list are considered as being themselves included in the list. For example the word "sing" occurs in the Thorndike list. The word "singing" would be counted as being included in the Thorndike list although it will not be found there in this form. Thorndike's introduction to his word list should be carefully read to determine which derived forms he has not included. Record the total number of words not included in Thorndike's list as X_4.

5. Make a sampling of seventy-five sentences from the book as follows:

(a) Count the total number of pages in the book, excluding picture pages.

(b) Divide the number of pages in the book by 75 to determine which pages must be chosen. For example, if there are 150 pages in the book, a sentence should be taken from every other page to make up the 75 needed sentences. If there are 250 pages in the book, a sentence should be taken from every third page.

(c) Tabulate as simple or not simple the first complete sentence on every page to be sampled. A simple sentence is defined as one in which there are no dependent or co-ordinate clauses; it therefore contains only one subject and one predicate.

6. Count the number of simple sentences in the 75 sentences sampled. Record this number as X_5.

7. Apply the following regression equation to the data, X_1 being the reading score; X_2 the number of different words in a thousand; X_3 the number of prepositions in 1,000 words; X_4 the number of uncommon words in 1,000; and X_5 the number of simple sentences in 75:

$$X_1 = .085X_2 + .101X_3 + .604X_4 - .411X_5 + 17.43$$

The answer to the equation will be the score on the paragraph-meaning section of the Stanford Achievement Test necessary for reading the book measured. This reading score may be translated into reading grades according to table.

Table II

Grade Standards—Paragraph-Meaning Section of the Stanford Achievement Test

Scores	*Grade*
4—16	II
18—34	III
36—52	IV
54—62	V
64—70	VI
72—78	VII
80—86	VIII
88—94	IX
96—102	X
104—112	XI

As an illustration of how this technique was made use of by us, we append here the elements obtained from the book, "For the Faith," one of the Maryknoll Mission Series, the substitution of these elements in the regression equation and the resultant score:

Number of different words in 1,000	=	471
Number of prepositions in 1,000	=	145
Number of uncommon words in 1,000	=	32
Number of simple sentences in 75	=	24

$X_1 = .085(471) + .101(145) + .604(32) - .411(24) + 17.43$
$X_1 = 81.57$

The reading score necessary for mastering the mechanics of this book is 81.57. From the table we immediately see that, according to structure, this book is suitable for Grade VIII.

Table III

The following list represents the books graded according to the technique just described:

Grade III

Name	*Author*	*Publisher*
Catholic Nursery Rhymes	Sister Gertrude	Benziger
The Little Flower's Love for the Eucharist	Sister Eleanore	Benziger
The Little Flower's Love for Her Parents	Sister Eleanore	Benziger

Grade III

Name	*Author*	*Publisher*
Mass for Children	Kelly, William	Benziger
My Mass Book	Sister Mary	Benziger
Our First Communion	Kelly, William	Benziger
Our Sacraments	Kelly, William	Benziger
Religion, Book I	Doctor Shields	Cath. Ed. Press
Religion Hour, Book I	Hannon, Rev. J. D	Benziger
The Wonder Days	Taggert, Marion Ames	Benziger
The Wonder Gifts	Taggert, Marion Ames	Benziger
The Wonder Offering	Taggert, Marion Ames	Benziger
The Wonder Story	Taggert, Marion Ames	Benziger

Grade IV

All the Year Round	Sister Emmanuel, O.S.B	Herder
Catholic Teaching for Young and Old	Wray, Winifred	Benziger
Child's Way of the Cross	Thayer, M. D	Macmillan
First Christmas	Donoghue, S. J	Kenedy
King of the Golden City	Mother Loyola	Kenedy
Religion, Book II	Doctor Shields	Cath. Ed. Press
Religion Hour, Book II	Hannon, Rev. J. D	Benziger
Ruth and Robert	Bosch, H. R	Macmillan
Simple Life of Jesus	Sister of Notre Dame	Herder
Stories for First Communion	Sister of Notre Dame	Herder
Story of Saint Francis	Sister Eleanore	Benziger
Ten Eager Hearts	Sister of Notre Dame	Herder

Grade V

First Communion	Mother Loyola	Benziger
First Communion Days	Sister of Notre Dame	Herder
Friends of Jesus	Sister of Holy Child Jesus	Benziger
God's Book of the Holy Child	Marie St. Ellerker	Kenedy
Grannie's Story Cupboard	Rel. of Holy Child Jesus	Herder
Home Truths for Mary's Children	Madame Cecilia	Benziger
Laws of the King	Rel. of Holy Child Jesus	Benziger
Life of Our Blessed Lord	Keon, Grace	Kenedy
Lisbeth	Waggaman, Mary T	Benziger
Mary the Queen	Rel. of Holy Child Jesus	Benziger
Miracles of Our Lord	Rel. of Holy Child Jesus	Benziger
Mountains of Help	Marie St. Ellerker	Kenedy
New Testament Stories	Martindale, S. J	Herder
Religion, Book III	Doctor Shields	Cath. Ed. Press
Simple Life of Mary	Sister of Notre Dame	Herder

Grade V—Continued

Name	*Author*	*Publisher*
Story of the Divine Child	Lings, Rev. A. A	Benziger
Story Ever New	Higgins, James	Macmillan
Talks to Little Ones on the Apostles' Creed	Rel. of Holy Child Jesus	Benziger
Week with Christ the King	Sister Gertrude	Macmillan
With Mary His Mother	Rel. of Holy Child Jesus	Herder

Grade VI

Acts of the Apostles	Segur—Merrick	Herder
Behold the Lamb	Marie St. Ellerker	Kenedy
Boyland Bridge	MacDonnell, Rev. F	Benziger
Catholic Ceremonies	Durand	Benziger
The Catholic's Work in the World	Husslein, S. J	Benziger
Damien of Molokai	Quinlan, May	Benziger
Divine Counsellor	Scott, S. J	Kenedy
Dutiful Child	Wetzel, F. X	Herder
Field Afar Stories, Book III	Maryknoll Mis. Soc.	Maryknoll Pr.
Gospel for the Laity	Remler	Herder
Isaac Jogues	Scott, S. J	Kenedy
Jesus of Nazareth	Mother Loyola	Benziger
Life of Our Lord for Little Ones	Mother Salome	Benziger
Lives of the Saints for Boys	Mannix, M. E	Benziger
Lives of Saints for Girls	Mannix, M. E	Benziger
Living Temples	Jarrett, Rev. B	Kenedy
Lost in the Arctic	Svensson, S. J	Kenedy
Modern Martyr	Maryknoll Mis. Soc.	Maryknoll Pr.
Out to Win	Conroy, S. J	Benziger
The Story of Love	Cassilly, F. B	Herder
Story of Our Lord	Tynan, Catherine	Benziger
Story of Saint John Baptist de la Salle	Brother Leo	Kenedy
Talks to Boys	Conroy, S. J	Benziger
Told in the Twilight	Mother Salome	Benziger
Towards the Sanctuary	Lelen, Rev. J. M	Herder
Welcome	Mother Loyola	Benziger

Grade VII

Anchoress' Window	Nun of Tyburn	Herder
Christ Our King	Sister of Notre Dame	Herder
Divine Story	Holland	Joseph Tally
Field Afar Stories, Book II	Maryknoll Mis. Soc.	Maryknoll Pr.
For Greater Things	Kane, S. J	Herder
God's Fairy Tales	Dinnis, Enid	Herder

Grade VII—Continued

Name	*Author*	*Publisher*
Guide for Girls	Wetzel, F. X.	Herder
Heart of the Gospel	Donnelly, S. J.	Benziger
Holy Hour in Gethsemane	Donnelly, S. J.	Benziger
Home for Good	Mother Loyola	Kenedy
Joan of Arc	Anthony, C. M.	Benziger
Legends and Stories	Lutz	Benziger
Life of Blessed Gabriel	Sutton	Herder
Little Brother Francis of Assisi	Williams, M.	Macmillan
Little Imperfections	Garesché	Herder
Little White Flower	Taylor, T. N.	Pustet
Lives of the Saints	Berthold	Benziger
Martyr of Futuna	Maryknoll Mis. Soc.	Maryknoll Pr.
More Mystics	Dinnis, Enid	Herder
Mystics All	Dinnis, Enid	Herder
Once Upon Eternity	Dinnis, Enid	Herder
Our Failings	Von Oer	Herder
Paths of Goodness	Garesché, S. J.	Benziger
Planting the Faith in Darkest Africa	Forbes, F. A.	Herder
Sacred Heart in the Catholic Home	Garesché, S. J.	Benziger
Things Immortal	Garesché, S. J.	Benziger
Thoughts from Modern Martyrs	Maryknoll Mis. Soc.	Maryknoll Pr.
Towards the Altar	Lelen, Rev. J. M.	Herder
Victim to Seal of Confession	Spillman	Herder
Your Neighbor and You	Garesché	Benziger
Your Interests Eternal	Garesché	Benziger
Your Soul's Salvation	Garesché	Benziger

Grade VIII

Anchorhold	Dinnis, Enid	Herder
At the Parting of the Ways	Lucas, H.	Herder
Blue Gowns	Dease, A.	Maryknoll Press
Convent Life	Scott, S. J.	Kenedy
Child's Life of Joan of Arc	Mannix, Mary E.	Benziger
Early Friends of Christ	Conroy, S. J.	Benziger
Fabiola	Wiseman, Cardinal	Benziger
Father Price of Maryknoll	Maryknoll Mis. Soc.	Maryknoll Pr.
Field Afar Stories, Book I	Maryknoll Mis. Soc.	Maryknoll Pr.
Flowers of the Sanctuary	Reuter	Pustet
For the Faith	Maryknoll Mis. Soc.	Maryknoll Pr.
Gemma Galgani	Coghlan, P.	Benziger
Girl's Handbook of Woman	Donnelly, Eleanor	Herder
Home Virtues	Doyle, F. X.	Benziger

ST. ALBERT'S COLLEGE LIBRARY

Grade VIII—Continued

Name	*Author*	*Publisher*
Household of God	Martindale, Rev. C. C., S. J.	Benziger
House with Dummy Windows	Nun of Tyburn	Herder
In the Morning of Life	Lucas, H	Herder
In God's Army	Martindale, Rev. C. C., S. J.	Benziger
Life of Christ	Cochem, Rev. M	Benziger
Life of Saint Agnes	Smith, A	Benziger
Lives of the Saints	Butler, A	Benziger
Light of His Countenance	Hart	Benziger
Lourdes	Clarke	Benziger
The Mass	Dunney	Macmillan
Patron Saints for Boys		Pustet
Patron Saints for Girls		Pustet
Pearls from Holy Scripture	Watson, M. S	Herder
Prisoner in Japan	Donnelly, D	Herder
Religion, Book IV	Doctor Shields	Cath. Ed. Press
The Road to Somewhere	Dinnis, Enid	Herder
Saint Anthony	Ward	Benziger
Story of Joan of Arc	Ferguson	Herder
Teresa of Avila	Mullaney, K. F	Pustet
Towards the Eternal Priesthood	Lelen, Rev. J. M	Herder
Traveller's Tales	Dinnis, Enid	Herder
Young Man's Way to Happiness	Wetzel, F. X	Herder
Ways of Courage	Desmond, H. J	Herder

The types of books in the above list may be classified under four general headings: Allegory, Biography, Exhortation, Mystical.

While in some instances one type overlaps and includes others, the above classification holds because of the type that predominates in any particular book. For example, under biography and sometimes under allegory we subsume Biblical, and under exhortation, interesting instruction.

In Grade III we find only two types—biography and exhortation. Grade IV includes these two and one of the allegorical, *The King of the Golden City.* Grades V and VI contain all types except the mystical, and in Grades VII and VIII we find all types.

Procedure Used in Grading Books

The grading of the major portion of these books was done during the summer of 1928, with the co-operation of a number of teachers of the writer's Community, assisted by several College and High School Graduates. In a few instances the writing of the one thousand words, which is purely mechanical, was entrusted to High School students, who also helped some in arranging the words alphabetically. This latter work, however, was closely supervised by members of the regular corps of assistants, and high school students were not held responsible for recording prepositions, for checking the words with the Thorndike list, nor for the selection of the simple sentences in the sampling of 75. This more complex part of the technique was attended to by the writer, the teachers and the College graduates.

To render this study as objective as possible, it was thought advisable to resort to the plan adopted by the Winnetka Seminar teachers in their study—namely, to administer the paragraph-meaning section of the Stanford Achievement Test to every child who was to be included in this experiment. With these data at hand, it might be possible to discover whether or not the book which falls into a certain grade by the use of the technique, is fitted for an individual classified in the same grade by his score on the Stanford Reading Test. This was done accordingly.

But this very point may serve as an approach to the discussion of a difficulty that apparently looms up here. The technique used for the grading of these books takes care of structure only, and we know that content is an equally important factor, if, indeed, not a more important one. It may easily be seen that while a particular book is well within one's range as far as mechanics and structure are concerned, it may be far beyond one's comprehension in the matter of its content. This is a problem that we must

attempt to solve, at least for our purpose in the present study. The solution of this problem will be found in another chapter.

Distribution of Books

In September, 1928, the books in the above list were placed in three schools in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Owing to the limited number of books at our disposal, a complete set could not be made available for each school. Accordingly, the third, fourth, fifth and eighth grade books were installed in Marywood Elementary School; the seventh grade books in Saint John's, South Scranton, and the sixth grade books in Saint Cecilia's. Later, however, additional books in all grades were procured for Saint Cecilia's and Marywood. As decided upon, the pupils in the experimental grades in these schools were given the paragraph-meaning section of the Stanford Reading Test, and the reading ability of each child kept on record. It was found that in any one grade the reading ability ranged over three and often four and five grades.

The original intention was to use only one set of books and to transfer them from one school to another, but it was seen early in the experiment that the work would be greatly facilitated by securing a duplicate set of books for other schools. Through the generosity of a friend, who financed the movement, this was made possible. Accordingly, in December, 1928, another set of books was distributed among four schools in Maryland—Saint Mary's, Upper Marlboro; Sacred Heart School, La Plata; Saint Rita's, Dundalk; and Saint Bernardine's, Baltimore. The same procedure for administering the Stanford Reading Test was followed.

In April, 1929, the sixth, seventh and eighth grade books, that by this time had been completed by the pupils in the three schools in Scranton in which they had been originally placed, were shifted from one school to another, to give to all who had taken the Stanford Test the opportunity of reading as many as possible of these books. About the

same time the Principal of Saint Ephrem's School, Brooklyn, N. Y., installed in her school a set of the eighth grade books, and the Principal of Saint Mary's of the Mount School, Pittsburgh, Pa., a set of the sixth grade books. A few of the sixth and eighth grade books that were finished by the Scranton children were placed in Saint John's School, Pittston, Pa. The Stanford Reading Test was administered to the pupils in the experimental grades of the three new schools added to the list.

In the summer of 1929, the writer distributed the two original sets of books among four institutions—Saint John's Home for Boys, Cresson, Pa.; Saint Mary's Home for Girls, Cresson, Pa.; Saint Michael's Industrial School, Hoban Heights, Pa.; and Saint Patrick's Orphanage for Girls, Scranton, Pa. The same procedure was followed here as obtained in the above-mentioned schools. The writer herself supervised much of the reading. She thought the experience of observing the children as they made their selection of the books, and later as they read, would yield useful information in regard to the attitude of children to certain types of books.

Procedure Followed in the Reading of the Books

Those interested in the study judged it to be sufficiently reliable to aim at having each book read by approximately thirty children, equalizing this where possible between boys and girls, so that reactions for each book on the list could be secured from both. The next step was to provide a form for recording these reactions. The type adopted for this purpose was constructed partly of a form used by Lewis M. Terman in a study conducted by him of the reading tastes of gifted children,[2] and partly of a set of questions constructed by the writer and designed to give some idea of the pupil's comprehension of the spiritual content of the book. The first part of the form and the first question in the sec-

[2] *Genetic Studies in Genius*, Vol. I, p. 445, Stanford University Press, 1926.

ond part, "Would you like to read this book again?" were to test the children's interest.

Three forms were used—two for the books belonging to fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades, and a simpler form for grades three and four. One form for grades five, six, seven and eight is for books of the story type and biographies; the other is intended for the purely instructional or exhortational type of book. In both forms the first part is identical. The form for grades three and four was constructed because it was thought necessary to have something comparatively simple for these grades.

Check for Reading Books in Story Form
Grades 5, 6, 7 and 8

Name.....Age.....Reading Grade.....
Boy or Girl.....
School Grade.....Name of School.....
Title of Book.....Author of Book.....
Make a cross before the statement that tells how you liked the book.
.....One of the best books I ever read.
.....Liked it very well,—better than most books.
.....Liked it fairly well.
.....Did not care much for it.
.....Did not like it at all.

Answer the following questions:

1. Would you like to read this book again?.....
2. Which person in the story do you desire to be like?.....
3. Why? .....
4. What one action of this person did you like best?.....
.....
5. Why did you like it?.....
6. What could you do to be like this person?.....

Check for Reading Books not in Story Form
Grades 5, 6, 7 and 8

The first part of form is identical with the one just given.
Second Part.

Answer the following questions:

1. Would you like to read this book again?.....
2. Which thing in the book did you like best?.....
3. Why? .....

4. Were there other things that you liked?.....
5. Name some.....
6. Could you do some of those things?.....
7. How? .....

Check for Reading Books in Grades 3 and 4.

This form differs from the others in the statements which are used to find out what each one thinks of the books read, and in the questions asked. The statements are arranged as follows:
Make a cross before the statement which tells how you liked the book.

.....I like it some.
.....I like it very much.
.....I do not like it very well.
.....I do not like it at all.

Answer the questions:

1. Would you like to read this book again?.....
2. Tell what you liked best.....
3. Tell what you did not like.....
4. Which person did you like best?.....
5. Why? .....
6. Could you be like this person?.....

Reliability of the Forms

Terman does not tell us anything about the reliability of the form used by him, and his statement that "the reading covered such a wide range that the number of ratings for a given book was in most cases too small to warrant the computation of average ratings of individual books," [3] leads us to think that he deemed it unnecessary for his purpose. To the five statements in the first part of the form, the writer assigned the same values Terman used, namely, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, ranging in order of highest merit from one to five respectively. It was thought sufficient for this study to correlate reports on a particular book received from about fifty children, each child filling out two forms with an interval of at least one day between.

To arrive immediately at some idea of the reliability of the forms, a trial test was made of the selection, "Father

[3] *Genetic Studies in Genius*, Vol. I, p. 451, Stanford University Press, 1926.

Marquette," in the Ideal Sixth Reader. This particular subject was chosen because of its similarity in content to the material in the books used in this study. Two reports were received from each of forty-nine children. The coefficient of correlation of the first part of the form, determined by the Pearson Product Moment Method, was found to be .95. By tabulating the answers to the question, "Would you like to read this book again?" from both reports of the same group of children and using Pearson's Cosine Method [4] of the Tetrachoric Formula, the coefficient of correlation was found to be .94. As further proof of the reliability of the forms, two reports were obtained from each of forty-seven children on *The Prisoner in Japan,* by Donnelly, one of the books used in the present study. Adopting the same methods as before, the coefficient of correlation of the first part was found to be .95, and for the second part it was 1. This satisfied the conditions for establishing the reliability of the forms and they were accordingly used throughout the study.

Interpretation of Forms

The values assigned to the five statements in the first part of these forms enables us to find an average for each book and so to arrange the books for any grade according to children's preferences. Using the data obtained in the Stanford Reading Test, it was possible also to find the median reading grade and median chronological age of all children reading and liking any book. The median reading grade was taken as the criterion for arranging the books in grades. At first the median reading grade for boys and girls was found and recorded separately, but a comparison of these for a number of books showed so slight a difference that it was considered to be sufficiently reliable for the present study to use the combined median reading grade for all books. This method has been followed. Although the actual

[4] Odell, C. W., *Educational Statistics,* p. 271, New York, The Century Co., 1925.

grade of each child was carefully kept, the fact that grades vary so widely in different parts of our country seemed ample justification for omitting this procedure. The median reading grade, then, will be the chief criterion on which we base the grading of our list. The median chronological age, however, will be given for every book, because we believe that maturity plays more than a minor role in the acceptance or rejection, from the standpoint of interest, of a particular type of book.

The number of books graded by the Winnetka technique totaled one hundred and forty for all grades according to the following tables:

Third Grade	13
Fourth Grade	12
Fifth Grade	20
Sixth Grade	26
Seventh Grade	32
Eighth Grade	37
Total	140

As stated above this represents only a sampling of all the material that might be used for this purpose. Probably more than a few who examine this study will think of many books not included in this list which in their estimation deserve a place in preference to a number that are here, but we simply utilized those that the publishing companies made available for us. However, since it is to serve more as a suggestion of how spiritual reading should be written, we feel that we have a fair representation of the prevailing types, particularly of those that may be adapted to children's uses.

It will be seen that many of the books which occur in the first list do not appear in the final one. The reason for this is that a number of the books were read by too few to warrant their being included in the list. Again it is believed that although all are not included, we still have a fair representation of all that might be incorporated.

Method Used in Handling the Books

The books were kept in a convenient place, and pupils encouraged to examine them in their free time. The practice was to allow any child a grade or two above or below that in which a book was placed by the technique to read that book if he so desired. For example, if a pupil with sixth grade reading ability according to the Stanford Reading Test found a seventh or eighth grade book comprehensible and interesting, he was allowed to read and report on it. This proved to be a very satisfactory plan. Pupils were more interested in books in which their own choice figured largely than in those suggested by adults.

CHAPTER III

A Graded List of Spiritual Reading Books Based on Median Reading Grades and Children's Preferences

The purpose of this chapter is to present the classification of the books comprised in the original list, graded according to the median reading grade of the pupils who read and reported on them, as measured by the Paragraph Meaning Section of the Stanford Achievement Reading Test, and arranged within each grade according to the preferences of boys and girls. As explained previously, the combined median reading grade of boys and girls was taken as the criterion for arranging the books in grades.

In order to secure by grades as even a distribution of the books as possible it was found to be more convenient to select for each grade range arbitrary units not necessarily uniform for the several grades. This explains why the several grade ranges are as follows:

Eighth	7.7 to 8.9
Seventh	6.8 to 7.6
Sixth	6.3 to 6.7
Fifth	4.9 to 6.2
Fourth	4.4 to 4.8
Third	3 to 4.2

The mean chronological age of the children who read the books in each grade is also given because it is believed that physical maturity influences children in their choice of books, and while maturity is not entirely dependent on age as Dr. Furfey shows in his monograph, "The Measurement of the Developmental Age," [1] it may be some index to the reasons for certain choices made by boys and girls.

Within each grade the books are arranged according to children's preferences. On each form used for checking the

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[1] *Educational Research Bulletin*, No. 10, Vol. II (Dec., 1927), p. 1.

children's reading, there are found five statements. The following values are assigned to these statements:

	Value
One of the best books I ever read	1
Liked it very well—better than most books	2
Liked it fairly well	3
Did not care much for it	4
Did not like it at all	5

By finding the average of the values given by all the boys and girls who read each book, we can arrange the books in each grade according to the preferences of boys and girls. We also found for each book the per cent of liking for boys and girls.

Table IV gives the classification of the books according to the several criteria just referred to:

Table V

Grade III

Reading Grade Range 3.0—4.2 Chronological Age Range 9.3—11.0

Boys	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value	*Girls*	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *Catholic Ed. Series,* Bk. I	14	100	1.2	1. *Catholic Ed. Series,* Bk. I	16	100	1.2
2. *Religion,* Bk. I, (Hannon)	13	92	1.9	2. *Our First Communion*	18	100	1.2
3. *The Wonder Offering*	15	100	1.9	3. *The Little Flower's Love for Parents*	29	100	1.3
4. *The Wonder Days*	12	91	2.0	4. *The Wonder Story*	14	93	1.3
5. *Catholic Nursery Rhymes*	16	100	2.2	5. *Catholic Nursery Rhymes*	34	94	1.4
6. *The Wonder Gifts*	11	100	2.3	6. *The Mass for Children*	20	90	1.4
7. *The Little Flower's Love for Parents*	24	83	2.3	7. *Religion,* Bk. I, (Hannon)	32	90	1.5
8. *The Mass for Children*	23	82	2.4	8. *The Wonder Gifts*	16	100	1.5
9. *The Wonder Story*	14	93	2.5	9. *My Mass Book*	13	100	1.6
10. *Our First Communion*	17	94	2.5	10. *The Wonder Days*	18	94	1.6
11. *My Mass Book*	15	80	2.6	11. *The Wonder Offering*	15	93	1.6

Grade IV

Reading Grade Range 4.4—4.8 Chronological Age Range 9.6—11.3

Boys

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *Catholic Ed. Series,* Bk. II.	12	100	1.3
2. *Stories for First Communion*	19	100	1.7
3. *A Child's Way of the Cross*	16	100	1.7
4. *Ruth and Robert*	16	100	1.8
5. *A Child on His Knees*	13	100	1.9
6. *All the Year Round*	15	100	2.0
7. *A Simple Life of Jesus*	21	90	2.0
8. *Our Sacraments*	17	100	2.0
9. *Story of St. Francis*	14	93	2.1
10. *The First Xmas*	12	83	2.2
11. *Religion Hour,* Bk. II.	19	89	2.3
12. *Ten Eager Hearts*	17	100	2.5

Girls

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *Catholic Ed. Series,* Bk. II.	14	100	1.2
2. *A Simple Life of Jesus*	16	93	1.3
3. *All the Year Round*	19	94	1.4
4. *Ten Eager Hearts*	38	97	1.4
5. *Stories for First Communion*	26	100	1.4
6. *Story of St. Francis*	45	97	1.5
7. *Ruth and Robert*	26	96	1.5
8. *The First Xmas*	20	100	1.5
9. *Our Sacraments*	25	96	1.6
10. *Child's Way of the Cross*	22	100	1.7
11. *Religion Hour,* Bk. II.	32	87	1.7
12. *A Child on His Knees*	15	100	1.8

Grade V

Reading Grade Range 4.9—6.2 Chronological Age Range 10.8—13.0

Boys

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *A Simple Life of Our Lady*	16	100	1.5
2. *New Testament Stories*	18	94	1.6
3. *Religion,* Bk. III, Shields	15	93	1.8
4. *First Communion Days*	16	100	1.9
5. *The Life on Earth of Our Blessed Lord*	15	93	2.0
6. *With Mary His Mother*	16	87	2.1
7. *A Week with Christ the King*	23	87	2.1

Girls

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *A Simple Life of Our Lady*	22	100	1.5
2. *Religion,* Bk. III, Shields	21	100	1.5
3. *First Communion Days*	18	94	1.6
4. *Flowers of the Sanctuary*	12	91	1.6
5. *The King of the Golden City*	21	95	1.8
6. *St. Teresa's Love for the Holy Eucharist*	16	93	2.1
7. *Catholic Teaching for Young and Old*	21	90	2.2

Grade V—Continued

Reading Grade Range 4.9—6.2 Chronological Age Range 10.8—13.0

Boys

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
8. *God's Book of the Holy Child*	18	88	2.2
9. *St. Teresa's Love for the Holy Eucharist*	13	100	2.3
10. *Catholic Teaching for Young and Old*	13	92	2.3
11. *Flowers of the Sanctuary*	15	86	2.4
12. *The King of the Golden City*	16	81	2.5
13. *Laws of the King*	14	85	2.5
14. *Mountains of Help*	15	51	3.0

Girls

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
8. *God's Book of the Holy Child*	19	73	2.3
9. *With Mary His Mother*	18	83	2.4
10. *The Life on Earth of Our Blessed Lord*	18	77	2.4
11. *New Testament Stories*	13	77	2.5
12. *The Laws of the King*	21	71	2.5
13. *A Week with Christ the King*	16	56	2.8
14. *Mountains of Help*	17	50	3.5

Grade VI

Reading Grade Range 6.3—6.7 Chronological Age Range 11.1—13.6

Boys

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *The Children's King*	13	100	1.8
2. *Told in the Twilight*	15	93	1.8
3. *Patron Saints for Boys*	18	100	1.9
4. *Lisbeth*	12	100	2.0
5. *St. John Baptist de la Salle*	18	83	2.0
6. *Friends of Jesus*	11	72	2.0
7. *Grannie's Story Cupboard*	17	82	2.2
8. *Mary the Queen*	12	83	2.3
9. *Miracles of Our Lord*	13	77	2.3
10. *The Dutiful Child*	14	80	2.3
11. *The Story of the Divine Child*	16	81	2.3
12. *Patron Saints for Girls*	14	85	2.5
13. *The Story of Our Lord*	15	86	2.5
14. *Isaac Jogues*	14	87	2.5
15. *Talks to Boys*	31	64	2.7
16. *The Story of Love*	15	40	3.6

Girls

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *Patron Saints for Girls*	37	100	1.4
2. *The Children's King*	17	100	1.5
3. *Grannie's Story Cupboard*	29	95	1.5
4. *Told in the Twilight*	25	92	2.0
5. *Lisbeth*	17	100	2.0
6. *The Dutiful Child*	14	93	2.0
7. *Isaac Jogues*	14	93	2.1
8. *Miracles of Our Lord*	15	80	2.3
9. *Patron Saints for Boys*	12	91	2.4
10. *The Story of Our Lord*	15	73	2.4
11. *The Story of the Divine Child*	21	85	2.5
12. *St. John Baptist de la Salle*	17	64	2.6
13. *Mary the Queen*	18	67	2.9
14. *Friends of Jesus*	16	37	3.3
15. *The Story of Love*	21	40	3.9

Grade VII

Reading Grade Range 6.8—7.6 Chronological Age Range 12.—13.5

Boys

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *Patron Saints for Boys*	23	100	1.4
2. *For Greater Things*	19	100	1.8
3. *Planting the Faith in Darkest Africa*	12	91	1.8
4. *Patron Saints for Girls*	17	94	2.0
5. *God's Fairy Tales*	18	94	2.0
6. *Once Upon Eternity*	16	100	2.0
7. *Jesus of Nazareth*	15	100	2.0
8. *Christ Our King*	16	100	2.0
9. *The Story Ever New*	13	92	2.0
10. *Lives of the Saints* Berthold	15	100	2.2
11. *Little Brother Francis of Assisi*	20	75	2.2
12. *The House with Dummy Windows*	15	86	2.3
13. *The Martyr of Futuna*	16	81	2.3
14. *The Little Flower*	17	82	2.4
15. *Field Afar Stories*	16	75	2.4
16. *Pearls from Holy Scripture*	14	93	2.4
17. *Father Damien*	18	89	2.4
18. *Out to Win*	24	67	2.8
19. *The Gospel for the Laity*	13	61	2.9
20. *Your Soul's Salvation*	15	53	3.0
21. *The Anchoress' Window*	14	71	3.1

Girls

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *Patron Saints for Girls*	17	100	1.4
2. *Field Afar Stories*	15	100	1.4
3. *The House with Dummy Windows*	18	100	1.7
4. *Patron Saints for Boys*	23	100	1.8
5. *For Greater Things*	19	100	1.8
6. *Planting the Faith in Darkest Africa*	45	91	1.9
7. *Lives of the Saints* Berthold	15	93	1.9
8. *The Story Ever New*	16	87	2.0
9. *The Martyr of Futuna*	16	87	2.1
10. *The Little Flower*	18	77	2.2
11. *Pearls from Holy Scripture*	20	90	2.2
12. *Little Brother Francis of Assisi*	17	94	2.2
13. *God's Fairy Tales*	31	93	2.2
14. *Once Upon Eternity*	17	82	2.2
15. *Jesus of Nazareth*	17	82	2.3
16. *Christ Our King*	18	94	2.3
17. *The Anchoress' Window*	32	84	2.4
18. *Father Damien*	16	81	2.7
19. *The Gospel for the Laity*	15	46	3.2
20. *Your Soul's Salvation*	19	36	3.3

Grade VIII

Reading Grade Range 7.7—8.9 Chronological Age Range 12.—13.9

Boys

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *Mississippi Blackrobe*	14	100	1.5

Girls

	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
1. *The Victim to the Seal of Confession*	22	100	1.6

Grade VIII—Continued

Reading Grade Range 7.7—8.9 Chronological Age Range 12.—13.9

Boys	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
2. *Life of Christ,* Cochem	10	100	1.5
3. *Jeanne D'Arc,* Antony	15	100	1.7
4. *Joan of Arc,* Ferguson	17	94	1.7
5. *Prisoner in Japan*	18	88	1.8
6. *St. Joan of Arc,* Mannix	11	100	1.9
7. *Victim to the Seal of Confession*	19	90	2.0
8. *Traveller's Tales*	11	82	2.3
9. *Fabiola*	16	68	2.5
10. *Light of His Countenance*	16	68	2.5
11. *Mystics All*	20	70	2.5
12. *At the Parting of the Ways*	9	88	2.5
13. *For the Faith*	21	81	2.6
14. *Thoughts from Modern Martyrs*	13	69	2.6
15. *The Divine Story*	16	81	2.7
16. *More Mystics*	16	69	2.8
17. *Gemma Galgani*	15	67	2.8
18. *Ways of Courage*	15	73	3.0
19. *Teresa of Avila*	16	62	3.1
20. *Boyland Bridge*	24	45	3.1
21. *The Road to Somewhere*	12	75	3.2
22. *Life of St. Agnes*	14	56	3.3
23. *In the Morning of Life*	12	41	3.6
24. *The Things Immortal*	13	30	3.7

Girls	No. Read.	% Liking	Aver. Value
2. *Mystics All*	16	93	1.7
3. *Jeanne D'Arc,* Antony	16	100	1.7
4. *Joan of Arc,* Ferguson	20	90	1.7
5. *The Road to Somewhere*	17	88	1.8
6. *St. Joan of Arc,* Mannix	21	100	1.9
7. *Mississippi Blackrobe*	16	94	1.9
8. *Life of Christ,* Cochem	13	77	1.9
9. *The Divine Story*	17	94	2.0
10. *Traveller's Tales*	25	96	2.1
11. *More Mystics*	16	87	2.1
12. *Life of St. Agnes*	16	85	2.2
13. *Prisoner in Japan*	51	70	2.3
14. *Fabiola*	17	70	2.3
15. *Light of His Countenance*	19	89	2.3
16. *For the Faith*	13	84	2.3
17. *Gemma Galgani*	14	86	2.6
18. *Thoughts from Modern Martyrs*	19	68	2.7
19. *A Guide for Girls*	31	67	2.8
20. *Teresa of Avila*	16	50	3.1
21. *The Things Immortal*	19	58	3.1
22. *At the Parting of the Ways*	8	25	3.6
23. *In the Morning of Life*	13	30	3.7
24. *Ways of Courage*	13	23	4.2

Interpretation of Table V

An analysis of Table V reveals several interesting facts:

I. The changes that were made within the original grades.

II. The number of books in each grade is less, and in some instances considerably less, than that in the original list.

III. There are differences in the reading tastes of boys and girls.

IV. Notwithstanding the low average given some books, the per cent of liking proves that they have a special appeal for certain types of children.

I. Changes Within the Original Grades

It will be remembered that the technique for grading books used in this study takes care of structure only and gives no assurance that from the standpoint of content a book belongs in that grade. In our experiment we found a number of books too difficult for the grade in which they were placed by the technique and a few too easy. Hence we transferred these books from one grade to another in order to place them where they seemed most fitted according to the judgments of the children who reported on them. The following table shows the changes that have been made:

Table VI

Grade III

Our Sacraments.....transferred to Grade IV.
The Little Flower's Love for the Eucharist.transferred to Grade V.

Grade IV

Catholic Teaching for Young and Old.....transferred to Grade V.
The King of the Golden City.....transferred to Grade V.
A Child on His Knees (not in the original list) placed in..Grade IV.

Grade V

Friends of Jesus.....transferred to Grade VI.
Grannie's Story Cupboard.....transferred to Grade VI.
Lisbeth .....transferred to Grade VI.
Miracles of Our Lord.....transferred to Grade VI.
The Story of the Divine Child.....transferred to Grade VI.
The Story Ever New.....transferred to Grade VII.

Grade VI

Damien of Molokai.....transferred to Grade VII.
Field Afar Stories, Bk. III.....transferred to Grade VII.
Gospel for the Laity.....transferred to Grade VII.
Out to Win.....transferred to Grade VII.
Boyland Bridge.....transferred to Grade VIII.

Grade VII

Joan of Arc, Antony.....transferred to Grade VIII.
More Mystics.....transferred to Grade VIII.
Mystics All.....transferred to Grade VIII.
The Victim to the Seal of Confession.....transferred to Grade VIII.

Grade VIII.

Flowers of the Sanctuary.....transferred to Grade V.
The House with Dummy Windows.....transferred to Grade VII.
Patron Saints for Boys.....transferred to Grade VII.
Patron Saints for Girls by Pustet.....transferred to Grade VII.
Pearls from Holy Scripture.....transferred to Grade VII.

Fewer Books in List II Than in List I

One reason for this may be ascribed to lack of co-operation on the part of a few teachers in whose classes some of these books were placed. There were certain units of work to be covered in the subject-matter texts, diocesan examinations to be prepared for, etc., and these teachers in their zeal to provide drill in these all important matters felt there was no time for outside reading. Hence, if not discouraged entirely, this reading was certainly not encouraged, and the result was that the few reports received from some books made it impossible for us to include them in our final list.

A reason that might be combined with the above is lack of interest on the part of pupils in this specific type of reading. They are so accustomed to the reading of fiction, adventure. etc., that their tastes in this particular line have not been cultivated. In one class that the writer visited she asked the children to write the names of all the books they could recall having read at any time. Forty-two children reported. The number of books read by individuals ranged from one to sixty, and the total number read was 508. The types included fiction, adventure, religion and biography. Of the religious books, one child read *Lives of the Saints;* one *Ben Hur;* one *Mother Machree;* three *Tom Playfair;* and one *Tom Playfair* and *Percy Wynne.* The *Lives of the*

Saints, however, is the only one that, properly speaking, falls in the class—spiritual reading. The girl who reported having read sixty books had not included a single religious book in her list. This same girl read seven of our books. We shall give the names of these and her reaction to each one.

Mountains of Help. "I do not like this type of book. It does not interest me."

The Anchorhold. "I do not like this book. It is too old and uninteresting to me. I do not like the kind of English they use."

God's Book of the Holy Child. "I would not like to read this book again, because, although it would be interesting to some, it only fairly interests me. I would rather a story of boys and girls of today."

Little Brother Francis of Assisi. "I liked it because it was so interesting and told about how kind St. Francis was."

Thoughts from Modern Martyrs. "I liked it because it showed the great love of the priest for God."

The House with Dummy Windows. "An interesting book and not like any others I have read. It shows the various ways God has of calling those that He wishes to keep nearest to Himself."

Joan of Arc, Ferguson. "It is very interesting and something worthwhile to read. It showed the bravery, and kindness and piety that Joan possessed."

Her reactions to the first three are similar to those of other pupils who read them—these books are not popular with children. Her reactions to the other four, which are popular with the majority of those who read and reported on them, prove that books of this type do appeal to her interest and the only reason she had not included them in her list was that they were not made available to her for reading.

The following books were eliminated because of the lack of a sufficient number of reports received on them:

Table VII

Grade V

Talks to Little Ones on the Apostles' Creed .....Religious of the Holy Child Jesus

Grade VI

Acts of the Apostles.....Segur-Merrick
Behold the Lamb.....Marie Saint Ellerker
Catholic Ceremonies.....Durand
The Catholic's Work in the World.....Husslein
The Divine Counsellor.....Scott
Life of Our Lord for Little Ones.....Mother Salome
Living Temples.....Jarrett
Lost in the Arctic.....Svensson
A Modern Martyr.....Maryknoll Mission So.
Welcome.....Mother Loyola

Grade VII

Field Afar Stories, Bk. II.....Maryknoll Mission So.
Heart of the Gospel.....Donnelly
Holy Hour in Gethsemane.....Donnelly
Legends and Stories.....Lutz
Life of Blessed Gabriel.....Sutton
Paths of Goodness.....Garesché
Your Neighbor and You.....Garesché
Your Interests Eternal.....Garesché

Grade VIII

Anchorhold.....Dinnis
Father Price of Maryknoll.....Maryknoll Mission So.
Field Afar Stories, Bk. I.....Maryknoll Mission So.
Lives of the Saints.....Butler
Religion, Bk. IV.....Shields
St. Anthony.....Ward
Young Man's Way to Happiness.....Wetzel

In all probability many of the books just mentioned were too mature for children belonging to the grades in which they were placed, and this, too, may account for the few reports received on them.

A final reason why there are fewer books on List II than on List I may be attributed to the fact that a number of the purely exhortational type and some biographies were eliminated because the few reports received from them in the beginning showed that they were too mature for children.

The following were eliminated because content was believed to be too difficult:

Table VIII

Book	*Grade*	*Author*
First Communion	5	Mother Loyola
Home Truths for Mary's Children	5	Madame Cecilia
Towards the Sanctuary	6	Lelen
Home for Good	7	Mother Loyola
Little Imperfections	7	Garesche
Our Failings	7	Von Oer
Towards the Altar	7	Lelen
Convent Life	8	Scott
Early Friends of Christ	8	Conroy
Girl's Handbook of Woman	8	Donnelly
Home Virtues	8	Doyle
Our Nuns	8	Lord
Lourdes	8	Clarke
Towards the Eternal Priesthood	8	Lelen
The Mass	8	Dunney
Biographies		
In God's Army	9	Martindale
The Household of God	8	Martindale

We have here eighteen examples of books which, according to structure, can be read by fifth, sixth, seventh or eighth grade pupils, but which, notwithstanding, are not comprehensible because the content is too mature. The instructions and, in fact, most of the material contained in these books never came within the experience of the children who read them, and therefore could not be assimilated by them. This is conclusive proof that mastery of the mere mechanics of reading does not guarantee comprehension. Something more is necessary. Books of this type are important as aids to the teacher but quite useless in the hands of pupils not prepared for them.

A Comparison of the Reading Tastes of Boys and Girls

A cursory examination of Table V will convince us that similarities and differences in the reading tastes of boys and girls do exist. It will not be necessary to trace these in every grade. The point can be proven just as well by an

analysis of a few grades. In Grade VII we find *Patron Saints for Boys* at the head of the boys' list, while its companion volume, *Patron Saints for Girls,* leads the same grade on the girls' list. *Patron Saints for Girls* is fourth on the boys' list, and *Patron Saints for Boys* occupies the same place on the girls' list. *The Gospel for the Laity* and *Your Soul's Salvation* hold the same ranks on both lists—nineteenth and twentieth, respectively. *Little Brother Francis of Assisi* is eleventh on the boys' list and twelfth on the girls'. *Damien of Molokai* is ranked seventeenth by the boys and eighteenth by the girls. Thus far the tastes of both sexes are in close agreement. But fourth on the boys' list we find *God's Fairy Tales,* followed by *Once Upon Eternity,* both of the mystical type. These same two books rank thirteenth and fourteenth on the girls' list. *Jesus of Nazareth,* by Mother Loyola, ranks in the seventh place on the boys' list, while it has only fifteenth place on the girls'. Again we see a difference when the boys give *Christ Our King,* eighth place, while we find it rated sixteenth on the Girls' list. *The Little Flower,* by Taylor, is found fourteenth on the boys' list and tenth on the girls'.

In Grade VIII we find the most striking difference in the relative places assigned the book, *The Road to Somewhere.* It is fifth on the girls' list and twentieth on the boys'. This book is a religious novel which deals with mystical incidents. It is certainly not the lack of appreciation of the mystical that renders the boys' judgments so different from the girls' because they rated *God's Fairy Tales* and *Once Upon Eternity,* both redolent with mystical suggestion, higher than the girls. The main objection to the book on the part of the boys must be the element of romance which is present, and this, in all probability, is the very thing that is responsible for the girls' attraction to it. One boy gave as his reason for rejecting it, "It is about a girl, and I don't like to read about girls." A girl's reaction was, "Interesting and different from other books." The boys rank *The Life of Christ,* by Cochem, second on their list, while the

girls give it eighth place. One hundred per cent of the boys liked this book, while only seventy-seven per cent of the girls did so. The book, *At the Parting of the Ways,* by Lucas, which is of the purely exhortational type, is assigned twelfth place on the boys' list with eighty-eight per cent liking it, while the same book is given twenty-second place on the girls' list with only twenty-five per cent liking it. *The House With Dummy Windows* is given third place by the girls, while the same book is found twelfth on the boys'. *Field Afar Stories,* second on the girls' list, is seen to occupy fifteenth place on the boys'.

The fact that the boys in so many instances rated books on this list higher than the girls is convincing proof that this type of reading has an appeal for boys. As further example of this we find the boys ranking *New Testament Stories* second on their list with ninety-four per cent liking it, while the girls rank the same book tenth on their list with only seventy-seven per cent liking it. The boys rate *The King of the Golden City* eleventh, with only eighty-one per cent liking it, while the girls rate it fourth on their list, with ninety-five per cent liking it. The explanation of this, however, is easily arrived at. The central figure in the allegory is a little girl. True to type, many of the boys will not favor this. The majority, though, looked beyond the mere externals and found out that the book has a message for them as well as for the girls. This accounts for the eighty-one per cent voting in favor of it. On the other hand, there are certain differences, the explanation of which would require a more thorough study than this one pretends to be. For instance, why the girls place *The Victim to the Seal of Confession,* a seventh grade book, first on their list with one hundred per cent liking it, while it is seventh on the boys' list with ninety per cent liking it. Again, why do the boys rate *The Divine Story,* by Holland, fifteenth on their list with only eighty-one per cent liking it, while the girls give it ninth place with ninety-four per cent liking it? In grade seven we find *God's Fairy Tales*

and *Once Upon Eternity*, both of the mystical type, occupying fifth and sixth places on the boys' list, while the same two books are relegated to ranks thirteen and fourteen, respectively, on the girls' list. We were inclined to think that this type had a greater appeal for boys than girls, but when we examine the eighth grade list and find *Mystics All* second on the girls' list and eleventh on the boys', and *More Mystics* eleventh on the girls' and sixteenth on the boys', we conclude that books of the mystical type have an interest value for girls as well as for boys. Many more examples similar to those cited above could be instanced. A future study may enable us to gain more insight into the reasons for these differences.

Responses of Girls and Boys to Certain Books

A comparison of the reactions of boys and girls to certain books will enable us to differentiate the quality of the responses given by them respectively. We shall state first what we consider the most representative responses to three books and then proceed to a comparison of their qualities.

Reactions to *The Life of Joan of Arc*

Girls

1—"It was interesting and I like to read about pious people."
2—"I liked the book because it told that Joan loved to do things for God."
3—"I liked Joan because wherever she heard the Angelus she knelt down and prayed."
4—"This book teaches us how to be holy and truthful."
5—"This book teaches us to love God and trust in Him and do what He commands."
6—"This book teaches us to receive Holy Communion often and to go to Mass as often as possible."

Boys

1—"I liked Joan because of her bravery and courage and because she would not give up her faith for death even."
2—"I liked Joan because she did what God told her."
3—"I liked Joan because she was true to God and suffered for Him."

4—"This book teaches me how to obey God's orders."

5—"I could be like Joan by going to confession often, and by praying often and by being devout in hearing Mass."

6—"I could be martyred if called upon like Joan."

Reactions to *Little Brother Francis of Assisi*

Girls

1—"It showed how we can be kind to the poor and not to shun them because they are poor."

2—"I liked St. Francis because he was always trying to do the will of God."

3—"I liked St. Francis' kindness because it showed his love for God."

Boys

1—"I liked it because it tells how good St. Francis was to the poor."

2—"I liked St. Francis because in every way he tried to be like our Lord. He was glad to have the wounds of our Lord in his body."

3—"I liked it because St. Francis was always trying to get others into the service of God."

Reactions to *The Lives of the Saints*

Girls

1—"I would like to read this book to learn more of how kind and charitable the saints were and how they devoted their lives to God."

2—"I would like to read this book to learn more about St. Aloysius, so that I may be able to serve God as he did."

3—"This book is not only interesting but teaches us how to become virtuous."

4—"I like this book because it tells us if we pray to St. Joseph he will not forget us when we are dying."

5—"By reading this book often we can put many of the virtues of the saints into practice."

6—"I liked St. Catherine of Sienna best, because she endured a great deal and had patience. I could be like her by not losing my temper and by being holy."

7—"The lives of the saints show that we shall not have to spend much time in Purgatory if we give our spare time to God."

8—"The reading of this book shows what we must do to be a saint."

Boys

1—"I liked St. Thomas Aquinas because he served God all his years. I could be like him by never giving up no matter who wants me to."

2—"The lives of the saints and their great works will remain deep in our minds and may some day lead us in their footsteps."

3—"I liked St. Francis because he helped the poor and he didn't

want everything for himself. I could be like him in this."

4—"I liked St. Rose of Lima because she was mystically united to God."

5—"We could follow the saints' examples in little ways by doing little pious practices."

6—"I liked this book because it shows how good the saints were. I could be like them by giving up things for Jesus.

7—"I liked St. Catherine of Sienna because she remained three days without speaking to anyone but God and her confessor."

8—"I liked St. Angela because of her desire to be always in prayer. I could try to be very pious like her.

There is very little difference in the quality of the reactions on the part of boys and girls to *The Life of Joan of Arc.* There appears to be a little more depth in responses 1, 3 and 6 of the boys than in any one of those of the girls to the same book, but the difference is so slight as to be almost negligible. In comparing the responses of both sexes to the book, *Little Brother Francis of Assisi,* we find responses 2 and 3 of the boys much superior to those of the girls. The most striking difference is found in the reactions of both to *The Lives of the Saints.* The boys' responses imply a greater realization of contemplative prayer, while nearly all the responses of the girls center around the practice of the active virtues. Responses 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the girls decidedly favor the active life, while responses 2, 4, 7 and 8 of the boys clearly lean towards the contemplative.

Low Average and High Per Cent of Liking

The third statement in the first part of the form for checking children's reading is, "Liked it fairly well." To this, as previously stated, we assigned the value 3. We found the interpretations of this statement to vary widely. To some children it represented a degree of liking which is rather high, others used it to express a degree of liking which is only mediocre, while a third group intended it to convey the meaning that they did not like it very much. This in all probability explains the discrepancies which exist in many places between the averages and the per cents

of liking assigned any particular book. We naturally consider the value 3 as representing a degree of liking that is rather low, and hence might be disposed to consider an average of 3 as low. But in many instances, and particularly by boys, this statement was interpreted as meaning a fairly high degree of liking. This accounts for the fact that certain books with averages clustering around 3 have per cents of liking higher than might be expected.

In Grade VIII, *Ways of Courage,* a book of the purely exhortational type, has received an average of 3 from the boys, and one of 4.3 from the girls. But when we look at the per cent of liking we see that seventy-three per cent of the boys liked it. This means that more boys liked than disliked it, and while many of the boys gave it a rating of 3, and some even of 4 or 5, still the fact that seventy-three per cent liked it is evidence that it has an interest value for many, and for that reason should be retained on the list. With the girls the percentage is much lower—being only twenty-three. Yet a percentage of twenty-three in a group of one hundred, for instance, would mean that it has an interest value for twenty-three girls in that group. This in itself would seem a valid reason for retaining it on the list.

We find an almost similar example in the position taken on the two lists by the book, *The Things Immortal.* On the girls' list it receives an average of 3.1, with a per cent liking of fifty-seven. On the boys' list this same book is given an average of 3.7, with a per cent liking of only thirty. Now, while the low average would tend to eliminate this book from the list, the per cent favoring by boys and girls seems sufficient warrant for retaining it on both lists. An examination of Table V will reveal many instances similar to the two just cited and constitutes our justification for including in our final lists books which have received low averages.

This introduces us to the discussion of a problem referred to in Chapter II—namely, why a particular type of book appeals to one child and not to another. All the findings from experiments made in other fields in regard to individual differences apply here. If children differ in their tastes and aptitudes in the different types of ordinary reading, as the experiments of Arthur I. Gates conclusively prove, why should we not expect a similar situation in the much less explored field of spiritual reading. Some children excel in being able to interpret the general meaning in a selection, others in noting details, others again in being able to follow directions, etc. How often we find children who prefer history to biography or science, while others are more at home in the world of dramatic literature. We should not be surprised, then, if one child delights in the mystical type of spiritual reading, as we find he does, while for another child this possesses no attraction whatever. The latter finds greatest pleasure in reading The Lives of the Saints, or biographies of missionaries, etc. Another who revels in such allegories as *The King of the Golden City, The Children's King,* etc., will not find *Isaac Jogues, Mississippi Blackrobe,* or *Father Damien* quite as interesting.

We have already spoken of the differences in the reading tastes of boys and girls. We are fully conscious of the limitations of this study in proving more satisfactorily this particular point. We recognize that our data are too meager to enable us to generalize to any great extent; nevertheless, we feel that although our groups are small, our sampling is sufficiently representative of parochial school children generally to attach a certain amount of reliance to our conclusions. Other important studies, however, include this as one of the chief findings of their experiments. Some of these are: *Children's Interests in Reading,* by Arthur M. Jordan,[2] "A Preliminary Study of the Reading Tastes of

[2] The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, N. C., pp. 27-50-70.

High School Pupils," by Mrs. Roxanna Anderson,[3] "The Interests of Children in the Reading Work of the Elementary Schools," by Clark Wissler,[4] and "What High School Pupils Like to Read," by H. T. Eaton.[5]

That a particular type of book appeals to a particular child is evident from the results of this study, but the "why" of this cannot be accounted for as readily. It is to be hoped, however, that a future study will contribute much to the solution of this very important problem.

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[3] *Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. XIX (Dec., 1912), pp. 438-460.
[4] *Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. V (April, 1898), pp. 523-540.
[5] *Education*, Vol. XLIII (1922). pp. 204-209.

CHAPTER IV

The Interpretation of Children's Reactions

In a critical study of the reactions of children who read the books on this list, we find reasons why certain books appeal and why others fail to do so. A consideration of the undesirable qualities in books which induced children to reject them will at the same time lead us to an appreciation of the opposite qualities which are the factors that influence children's preferences in the selection of certain books.

The principal reasons given by children for rejecting books may be classified as follows:

1. No story
2. Lack of adventure
3. Too difficult
4. Style disliked
5. Too monotonous
6. Print too small
7. Lack of characters
8. No plot
9. Not enough action
10. Too little conversation
11. Too long
12. Too dry
13. Too deep

By subsuming,

No plot
Lack of adventure
Too deep and too dry
Too little conversation
Too long and style disliked

under,

No story
Lack of action
Too difficult
Lack of characters, and
Too monotonous

respectively, we have the following classification,

1. No story
2. Lack of action
3. Too difficult
4. Too monotonous
5. Print too small
6. Lack of characters

No Story

The story carries with it an appeal which usually dispenses with the teacher's aid. In books intended as supplementary reading for children, the lesson which the writer wishes to convey is not only brought home by means of the story, but becomes so fixed in the memory by association, that it may be called into action more readily, and this principally because of the human element which always pervades the story. Dr. Paul Hanly Furfey, as a result of a study which he made of a group of pre-adolescent boys, tells us: "The pre-adolescent loves the concrete in sermons. The writer ranked a series of a dozen sermons which he gave to a group, and then the boys ranked them. The correlation was only .50. On further analysis it appeared that this was due to the fact that the writer did not realize the appeal which stories and concrete applications have." [1]

In this study the following books were rejected because the story element was lacking, as shown by the reactions of some of the children who read them.

Household of God.....B "It hasn't any good stories in it."
In the Morning of Life.....G "It is mostly all words and not much of a story."
Ways of Courage.....G "I do not like it because it doesn't continue on with one story."
Girl's Handbook of Woman.....G "It hasn't any good stories in it."
Your Soul's Salvation.....B "It hasn't good stories in it."
Mountains of Help.....B "I would not like to read it again because it is all words and is not interesting."

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[1] *The Gang Age*, p. 156, New York, The Macmillan Co., 1926.

A Week with Christ the King...G "There was no story to it. It was all explanation."
Friends of Jesus.....G "It is not like a story. It is mostly words."

The following books were preferred because of the story element which they contain.

Religion, Book III, Dr. Shields..G "There are so many interesting short stories in it."
Religion, Book I, Hannon.....B "It has all kinds of nice stories in it."
The Wonder Offering.....G "Because there are many nice stories in it."
First Communion Days.....B "There are many nice stories about boys and girls receiving our Lord."
God's Fairy Tales.....G "It contains many stories which are about Christ."
B "All the stories were good."
B "I like it because the stories are told in the simplest of words."
B "It has good stories in it."
Once Upon Eternity.....G "It consists of many beautiful stories."
G "As soon as I started it I liked it."
Christ Our King.....G "It is a beautiful story of the King of Kings."
Victim to the Seal of Confession.G "It was an interesting book of one story."
G "It was a beautiful story."
Joan of Arc, Mannix.....G "It was in story form and not too long."
Traveller's Tales.....G "It is like other stories—easy to remember."
G "One of the best books I ever read. I don't know which story is the best."
The Story of Our Lord, Tynan..B "One of the most beautiful stories I ever read."

The examples just cited show us what an important part the story plays in influencing children's preferences for certain books. The ages of children who named this quality as being essential to the interest of a book ranged from nine to fourteen, while the range of the reading grade was from three to eight. However, the writer of stories which are to serve for spiritual reading for children must exer-

cise great care that the stories possess the qualities essential for producing in the readers the desired result—a more intimate union with God. If this latter is sacrificed then the book becomes useless as a medium for spiritual training and cannot be considered spiritual reading.

Lack of Action

This undesirable quality is mentioned very frequently by pupils as a reason for rejecting particular books, while on the other hand the presence of the opposite quality is assigned as the reason for liking a book. As examples of the former we quote:

St. Teresa of Avila	G	"It hasn't enough pep."
	B	"There were few adventures."
The Story of Love	G	"It was very quiet."
Religion Hour, Book II, Hannon	B	"It has not enough action."
	G	"There was nothing exciting in it."
The King of the Golden City	B	"There is not much action about it."
The Martyr of Futuna	B	"Not very exciting."
Traveller's Tales	B	"Not exciting."
Fabiola	B	"Not thrilling nor exciting."

The following books were selected because they possess action.

Ways of Courage	B	"It tells us to go down fighting."
	B	"Life is a battle—the battle of sin."
	B	"It tells of the efforts of American physicians to help suffering Cubans."
The Story of Love	B	"St. Paul was doing lots of work for God."
St. Teresa of Avila	B	"Because she (*found*) a monastery where some might give their lives to God."
The King of the Golden City	B	"It had many actions in it."
God's Fairy Tales	B	"All the stories are good and they have lots of action."
	G	"It had action and was interesting."
The Road to Somewhere	G	"A very exciting book."

Life of Joan of Arc.....G "Joan loved to do things for God."
G "It tells how Joan gave up her life for God."
B "Because of Joan's bravery and courage. She would not give up her faith for death even."
B "It was exciting."
Mississippi Blackrobe.....B "Exciting and I didn't know what was going to happen next."

It will be noticed that of the nine pupils who ascribed lack of action as a reason for rejecting books, six were boys; and out of the fourteen who favored books because they possessed the quality of action, ten were boys. Action, then, is a quality which attracts boys to the reading of books, and the fact that so many offered it as their reason for preferring certain books on our list offers sufficient evidence that many spiritual reading books should possess this quality if every type of child is to be reached. The age range for those mentioning this quality was from eleven to fourteen; the grade range from five to eight.

Too Difficult

This reason is put forward by children more frequently than any other as their justification for rejecting books. The expressions, "could not understand it," "too hard," "words too big," "too deep," "could not get the meaning," etc., show the criteria on which many children base their judgment of certain books. In nearly every instance where pupils give one of the above as a reason for rejecting a book, it is probable that the difficulty is not with the mechanics, but rather with the content. This is a factor which writers of books must take into account. It is not enough that the vocabulary be in perfect accord with the *Thorndike Word List* for each grade. Something above and beyond this is very necessary. Catholic educational psychologists should make an experimental study of the organized body of truth in the possession of the Church with a view to determine what and how much can be most satisfactorily presented

to children at the various age levels and assimilated by them in such a manner that it will function in their lives. This is the material that should form the content of our spiritual reading books. But it is only after this material has been subjected to frequent experimentation with large groups of children in widely separated districts that we can ever hope to arrive at a satisfactory solution of this problem.

Too Monotonous

While children have not used this term in giving their reason for the rejection of books, they have used many others that might be included under this. They have pronounced books "too dry," "too long," said that they contained "too much description," had "too much of the same thing in them," "were too much like Bible History," that they "explained nearly all the time," "repeated the same things a number of times," etc. These and other similar expressions may be interpreted as meaning that the content of the book was too monotonous. Writers of books for children must guard against this.

A book designated "too dry" by a child certainly lacks the qualities that make for interest. Again, a book may be long and at the same time interesting. If interesting, it is never considered "too long." Another criticism that applies here is that books possessed "too much description." A certain amount of description, if interesting, will not be considered boring, and, in fact, adds much to the value of a book. Care must be taken by writers of books for children to make the descriptive part as interesting as possible. Many used the criticism, "had too much of the same thing in it," or "repeated the same things a number of times." Repetition in itself should be no objection to a book, but, of course, for children interesting repetition must be made the objective. Only when this is done will children enjoy reading the same things over and over again. In no type of reading would this quality, interesting repetition, be more

apropos than in spiritual reading. We want to see the same truth under many aspects and functioning in divers ways. Interesting repetition enables a writer to do this. In another criticism, "some books were too much like Bible History," we at once detect the absence of the interest element. While the child gives as his reason for rejecting the book that it is like Bible History, this is not the real reason. Bible incidents can be told in a very interesting manner suited to the age level of the children for whom they are intended. This is exemplified by such books as *The Divine Story,* by Holland, *The Story Ever New,* by Higgins, *Christ, Our King,* by a Sister of Notre Dame—all of which, and a few others, similar in content, possess a deep interest value for children. A final criticism, "it explained nearly all the time," is worthy of consideration. Here, again, the element of interest is absent. For children, truths can be treated in such a way that they will not seem like explanations. These latter should be reserved for the formal lesson in religion. But when a truth is to be conveyed through supplementary reading, unaided by the teacher, then it must be done in as interesting a manner as possible.

Print Too Small

The physical make-up of a book, print, quality of paper and binding, illustrations, etc., is frequently responsible for the interest appeal which a book makes to children. The most important among these qualities is print. Frequently the criticism, "print too small," is alleged by children as their reason for rejecting a book. In our list the books which children found objectionable on this score are: *Life of St. Agnes,* Smith; *Fabiola,* Wiseman; *Gemma Galgani,* Coghlan; *Catholic Teaching for Young and Old,* Wray.

Life of St. Agnes, Smith

In the various volumes of the *Lives of the Saints,* the *Life of St. Agnes* was one of the most popular. But in this

separate volume it is not popular at all with the boys and is criticized by many of the girls, principally because of the print. It is set in ten point size type with a two point lead.

Fabiola

It was unfortunate that the edition of this book used in our study was one in which the print was very small. Six readers objected to it on this score. One girl said, "I like the story, but I would not like to read it again because the print is too small." This book is set in eight point size type with one point lead. The paper also is of a very poor quality.

Gemma Galgani

The main objection to this book may be traced to its make-up. Even the austere life led by Gemma does not offer the objection that the size of the print does. In fact her virtues, the strictest and most self-sacrificing, are spoken of highly by many of those who reported on this book. It is set in eleven point size type with one point lead. The print is fairly large, but the spacing between the lines makes it difficult to read.

Catholic Teaching for Young and Old

This is what we would call an interesting, instructional book; but it did not appeal very strongly to children. Teachers who observed pupils reading this book felt that their disinterest in it was occasioned by its make-up. It had a paper cover and very fine print. Pupils, generally, read only a few pages, and could not be induced to read more. It is set in ten point size type with one point lead.

Lack of Characters

It is clearly apparent from the reactions of girls and boys to many books on our list that an undesirable quality attrib-

uted by them to books is *lack of characters.* On the other hand, many books are preferred because of the admirable characters they describe. We shall append here a number of books, with the reactions of children attached, to show how the absence or presence of characters in a book affects children's reactions to it.

Books disliked because of lack of characters:

Girl's Handbook of Woman	G	"There were no special characters in it."
The Anchorhold	G	"The characters are the same."
In the Morning of Life	G	"I would rather read books with characters in them, for we can understand them better and imitate their good works."
	G	"Did not have any characters in it."
	G	It has no principal character or plot."
St. Teresa of Avila	G	"Not enough talking in it."
Story of Love	G	"There is no person in it but God."
	G	"Not interesting and no conversations in it."
	G	"Very quiet and no conversations."
Laws of the King	G	"No one hardly spoke."
Talks to Boys	B	"It was always describing and nobody was ever talking."
	B	"The characters weren't good."
	B	"It has not as good characters as other books I've read."

Books selected because of characters described:

New Testament Stories	G	"It is about our Lord and the saints, our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph."
	B	"Because it was very religious and about saints."
	B	"It has good characters and tells us about the life of Christ."
	B	"It was all about our Lord."
	B	"It was holy and about God and had good characters."
	B	"Because it told all about our Lord, His Blessed Mother and St. Joseph."

Friends of Jesus.....G "Because it is about our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."
B "Because our Lord, St. Joseph, and the Blessed Virgin are in it."
Grannie's Story Cupboard.....G "Because each little story had a good character and had something about God."
Mary the Queen.....B "Because it was interesting and was about God and all the people had good characters."
B "Because it tells all about our Lord, St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin."
The Story of Our Lord.....B "It tells about our Lord and is a wonderful book."
B "It tells about our Lord and His Blessed Mother."
The Story Ever New.....B "It is about our Lord."
The Road to Somewhere.....G "It contains many fine characters."

It will be noticed that of the sixteen who reject books because they have few or no characters, thirteen are girls and three boys. And of the fourteen who favor books because of the desirable characters they possess, eleven are boys and three girls. It would seem that girls recognize books lacking characters as unfavorable more quickly than they make choice of books possessing worthy characters, while the very reverse seems to hold true for boys. They select as favorable books containing admirable characters, while they pass over with very little comment books that are lacking in good characters. The age of children who selected or rejected books because of this quality ranges from ten to fourteen; while the reading grade range was from five to eight.

In our chapter on ideals, we shall treat more at length the reactions of boys and girls to specific characters portrayed in certain of the books on our list.

It would seem well here to undertake a brief analysis of a few books which will include the four types mentioned in Chapter II, in some of which desirable qualities predom-

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inate, and in others mainly the opposite, or undesirable qualities. We shall show that in any book, irrespective of the quality which predominates, there will be found many reactions expressive of the opposite quality. This emphasizes what we said in Chapter III about a particular type of book appealing to a certain type of child.

The types of books appearing in this list are: Exhortation, Biography, Allegory, Mystical.

Exhortation

As representative of this type we shall select for analysis *The Dutiful Child,* by Wetzel, and *Your Soul's Salvation,* by Garesché.

The Dutiful Child

This book was read by fourteen girls and fourteen boys. The median reading grade is 6.6, and the mean chronological age 13.6 years. The average for girls is 2 and for boys 2.3. This book was disliked by one girl and three boys, giving us a per cent of liking of 93 for the girls and 80 for the boys. The second statement, "Liked it very well—better than most books," represents the average of the girls' reactions to this book. The boys, with an average of 2.3, are not very far below this, and we might say their reactions give them a place somewhere between the second and the third statements with a leaning towards the second. The girl who disliked it gave as her reason, "Not interesting." Two of the three boys gave no reason, while the third boy said, "It is not interesting." This shows that of the twenty-eight who read the book, four disliked it, and only two gave a reason for so doing.

The following are representative of the best of the reactions to this book:

Girls

1—"It teaches us how to be good in order to get to heaven."

2—"It tells us about our parents and how we should treat them."

3—"It contains so many teachings of Christ that help us to be kind and obedient."

4—"It tells us why a child should pray."

Boys

1—"It had many interesting examples which teach us obedience, purity, piety and many other good lessons."
2—"It tells about obeying our parents."
3—"I could do some of the things spoken of in this book if piety would gain enough power over me."
4—"I could do some of those things by prayer."

This book of the purely exhortational type was interesting to the majority who read it, and proves that books of this type can be utilized to great advantage for spiritual reading for children.

Your Soul's Salvation

This book was read by 19 girls and 15 boys. It has a median reading grade of 7.4, and the mean chronological age of those who read and liked it is 12.9 years. The average for girls is 3.3 and for boys 3. It was disliked by 12 girls and 7 boys, yielding a per cent of liking of 36 for the girls and of 53 for the boys.

The book under discussion belongs properly to adult literature, but, with a number of others on the list, was subjected to a trial for the purpose of discovering whether or not it has any appeal for children. While the averages for both boys and girls are low, and the per cent of liking not very high, some of the reactions leave no doubt in our minds as to the certainty of the appeal which it has for a particular type of child.

The reasons for rejecting it ascribed by the 19 who disliked it may be summed up as follows:

"I could not get interested in it."
"I did not agree with it."
"I did not understand it."
"It hasn't good stories in it."
"It is all about one subject."
"Not interesting nor does it have enough to each lesson."

The above responses are probably based on the fact that the book is too mature for those who offered such reasons. On the other hand, let us examine the reactions of some children who read and liked the book:

Girls

1—"I liked it because it told about the poor souls."
2—"I liked it because it tells about uncomfortable people and the way you can help them."
3—"It tells us how we can save our souls."
4—"It is a nice book."

Boys

1—"I liked where it said it is useful to keep a small book and write on it your good deeds and your bad deeds."
2—"I liked where it told about how to keep away from sin, because we don't want our souls displeasing to God."
3—"I liked where it said that after this little interview with God we feel new courage and peace."
4—"This book teaches me how to talk to God and how to love Him."

The above reactions appear as sufficient evidence that this and similar books have an interest value for certain children and can be used by them to much advantage.

Biography

As representative of this type we take *Christ, Our King,* by a Sister of Notre Dame, and *Teresa of Avila,* by Mullaney.

Christ, Our King

This book was read by 18 girls and 16 boys. The median reading grade is 7.2 and the mean chronological age of those who read and liked it is 12.7. The average for boys is 2, and for girls 2.3. The per cent of liking for the boys is 100 and for the girls 94. This biography is popular with all the boys who read it and with all the girls except one. This girl gave as her reason for rejecting it, "I am not interested in it and I cannot understand some of it." It is not surprising that one out of thirty-four should find difficulty in reading this book. The fact that thirty-three out of thirty-four found the book interesting is convincing proof that more books of this type should be written. We shall give the chief reactions of the girls and boys to this book:

Girls

1—"It showed how to imitate Christ."
2—"I like it because it tells about Christ our King."
3—"I would like to read it again to impress it more on my mind."
4—"It is a beautiful story of the King of Kings."
5—"I could do some of the things spoken of in this book if God gave me the power."
6—"This book teaches me to be good and to think of others before myself."

Boys

1—"I like to read the *Life of Christ*, because it is the greatest thing in history."
2—"It teaches me how to help others in need of help."
3—"It teaches us what God did for us and how we should repay Him."

Teresa of Avila

In this we have an example of a biography that is not very popular with children, most probably because it is too mature. It was read by 16 girls and 16 boys. Its median reading grade is 7.8, and the mean chronological age of all who read and liked it is 13.5 years. The average for girls and boys is 3.1. It was disliked by 8 girls and 6 boys, yielding a per cent of liking of 50 for the girls and 62 for the boys. The reasons for disliking may be summed up as follows:

Not interesting
Not enough action
Too much description
Not enough talking
Few adventures
About girls

We shall give here the reactions of some who liked the book:

Girls

1—"St. Teresa showed us how to look for our vocations."
2—"It teaches us how to resist temptations and to pray against them and also how to have great confidence in God."
3—"I liked this book because it told how Teresa loved God."
4—"I liked this book because it showed how Teresa loved the Rosary."

Boys

1—"I liked this book because it shows us how to say the Rosary."

2—"This book showed us how St. Teresa suffered patiently."

3—"I could imitate St. Teresa by practicing piety and other virtues."

4—"I liked St. Teresa because she (*found*) a monastery where some might give their lives to God."

Judging from the above reactions, we have no doubt that if this book were written in a style better adapted to children's intelligence and experience, it would be popular with the majority. The wonder is that considering its maturity it had such a strong appeal for so many.

We shall conclude our analysis with an examination of one book of the allegorical type and one of the mystical.

Allegorical

The Children's King

This book was particularly popular with boys and girls. It was read by 17 girls and 13 boys. It has a median reading grade of 6.6 and the mean chronological age of all who read and liked it is 13.4 years. The per cent of liking is 100 per cent for both boys and girls. A summary of the chief reactions will confirm what we have said about the popularity of the book:

Girls

1—"I liked it because it told how our Lord had been kind and forgiving to sinners."

2—"I liked where the King took all the poor children to His house."

3—"I would like to be as good as the little girl in the story. She represents those who visit our Lord in the Tabernacle."

4—"I liked this book because it shows the things God has done for us and how we are to repay them."

5—"I could follow out some of the instructions in this book by making an extra visit to the Church besides on Sundays, asking for giveness for my sins, and by being kind to every one."

Boys

1—"I could try to be a true Christian, and pray from my heart, and not from my lips."

2—"This story teaches me to love Jesus and His Blessed Mother more dearly."

3—"I liked this book because it gives us a good example of our Lord."
4—"This book teaches me to be kind to the poor."
5—"This book teaches me to be obedient and kind."

Mystical

Mystics All

This book was read by 16 girls and 20 boys. The median reading grade is 8, and the mean chronological age for all who read it is 12.7 years. It has an average of 1.7 for the girls and of 2.5 for the boys. The per cent of liking for the girls is 93 and for the boys 70. The following responses represent the principal reactions of the boys and girls to this book:

Girls

1—"It was interesting and consists of many stories of followers of Christ."
2—"I like Imelda because she had faith in what God could do. I could try to be like her by loving God and being good."
3—"It is very interesting and shows how God calls people to Himself."
4—"Make Protestants know you are a good Catholic. Teach them and try to convert them."
5—"I liked the little girl because she was so kind and she died with the Rosary in her hand. She was praying to God to forgive her sins."
6—"The action I liked best was where Sammy took the Blessed Sacrament out of the burning Cathedral. It showed his great love for God."
7—"I liked Crazy Sammy because he kept on praying until the things that he wanted were given. He never despaired in God's mercy."
8—"I liked the boy dressed in khaki because he was always praying to our Lady for some favor."

Boys

1—"It tells what a Catholic should do and how he should act before a non-Catholic."
2—"I liked the book because it gave good example and was interesting."
3—"I liked the priest because he converted an old lady."
4—"I liked the young girl because she was so kind and charitable. I could practice charity."

5—"I liked Sammy because he tried to convert another boy. I could try to convert someone."

6—"I liked the priest because he was good and holy."

7—"I liked Crazy Sammy because his desire was always to be of some use in the world. I would like to imitate him by being of some good in the world as a priest, a brother or a monk."

8—"I liked Crazy Sammy because of his trust in God, and also because of his supreme sacrifice in offering his life in saving the Blessed Sacrament."

9—"Hannah was a Protestant and she turned Catholic because she could pray for her son who was killed in war."

The meaning of the word *mystical* as employed in this study indicates that which brings the soul into union with God or contact with God by any means whatever. A study of the above responses leaves no doubt in our minds as to the ability of children not only to detect this characteristic in books and to admire it, but also to desire to imitate it.

We trust that the foregoing analyses of children's attitudes to the spiritual reading material used as the basis of this study may serve to guide writers of this type of material in the method of incorporating into their writings the desirable qualities which alone make books interesting and without which these books will have little appeal.

CHAPTER V

Children's Ideals

One of the main objectives of this study was to ascertain, as far as possible, to what extent spiritual reading acts as a stimulus for the creation of ideals that may serve as a guide to individuals in their relations with God, with their neighbor and with self. The second part of the form used in this study for checking the reactions of children to the books they read was intended to give some insight into the children's comprehension of the spiritual contained in these books. An interpretation of this part of the form has enabled us to formulate a table containing the ideals of the children who read the books in Grades III to VIII inclusive.

That the reader may see how these reactions were interpreted we shall insert here the responses of eight children to six questions on *Planting the Faith in Darkest Africa,* by Forbes, and then list the ideals that are implied in these answers.

I. Would you like to read this book again? Yes, 7; No, 1.

II. Which person do you desire to be like? Father Simeon Lourdel, 8.

III. Why?

1—He was encouraging people to die for Christ.
2—He showed great love for God.
3—His great desire was to save souls.
4—Because of his high ideals.
5—He was kind.
6—He wanted to become a priest.
7—He led in the right path and the people followed.
8—He wanted to spread the faith in Africa.

IV. What one action of this person did you like?

1—When he taught Metisa the Rosary.
2—Teaching the negroes.
3—He laid down his life for Christ.

4—When he placed the people under the protection of the Most Holy Trinity and Our Lady of Africa.
5—"When he tried hard to plant the faith in Africa."
6—"When he tried to teach the King the true religion."
7—"When he took care of the sick."
8—"When he worked so hard in the heat and in malaria and fever districts."

V. Why did you like it?

1—"It showed he was always eager to do things to save souls."
2—"He did his best to convert them to the Catholic religion."
3—"Because he loved our Lord so much as to die for Him."
4—"Because he started with prayer."
5—"It was interesting."
6—"It showed he wanted everyone to know God."
7—"Because by his kindness he converted many."
8—"It showed his love for the faith."

VI. What could you do to be like this person?

1—"Be patient and kind."
2—"Be kind."
3—"Be a missionary."
4—"Begin work with prayer."
5—"Be kind."
6—"Try to spread the faith."
7—"By following in the right way."
8—"Practice the true religion."

Interpretation

The answer to the question, "Would you like to read this book again?", is a measure of interest and may serve as a check on the five statements given in the first part of the form. Of the eight who answered this, seven said "yes" and one "no," the reason for the latter being, "I don't like to read books twice." This, of course, did not mean that this book was not interesting to the boy who reported on it, but simply that it would lose its interest on second reading. All eight desired to be like the principal character, Father Simeon Lourdel. Under each of the other questions we shall list the ideals implied in the answers given as we interpreted them. If the same trait occurs more than once

under any question it will not be repeated. We shall then combine the separate lists into one.

Question III

Martyrdom
Love of God
The Salvation of Souls
High Ideals
Kindness
Religious Vocation
Force of Good Example

Question IV

Instruction
Martyrdom
Confidence in God
Devotion to Our Lady
Salvation of Souls
Corporal Work of Mercy
Mortification
Sacrifice
Suffering

Question V

The Salvation of Souls
Love of God
Martyrdom
Intercessory Prayer
Kindness
Love of the Faith

Question VI

Patience
Missionary Work
Intercessory Prayer
Kindness
Salvation of Souls
Imitation
Profession of Faith

Combining the above lists we have the following classification:

1—The Apostolate { Instruction, Prayer, Good Example
2—Confidence in God
3—Corporal Work of Mercy
4—Devotion to Our Blessed Lady
5—Kindness
6—Love of God
7—Love of Faith
8—Martyrdom
9—Mortification
10—Patience
11—Profession of Faith
12—Religious Vocation
13—Sacrifice
14—Suffering

In a similar manner we interpreted the reactions of all the children who read the books on our list. Since each

book was read by an average of thirty children, fifteen boys and fifteen girls, many ideals and virtues are repeated very frequently either in the same terminology or in terminology of similar connotation. We have combined these under like terms and then classified all under the following general headings:

I. Ideals which represent characters most admired.
II. Virtues which guide our relations with God.
III. Virtues which guide our relations with our neighbor.
IV. Virtues which guide us in the regulation of self.

Instead of tabulating these ideals separately for each grade we arranged the grades in three groups as follows:

Group I—Grades III and IV.
Group II—Grades V and VI.
Group III—Grades VII and VIII.

We did not find it necessary to make a separate classification for boys and girls, since there was no significant difference in the ideals listed by them. The following table presents this classification:

Table IX

Grades III and IV

Reading Grade Range 3.—4.8 Chronological Age Range 9.3—11.3 yrs.

I. Characters Most Admired.

Jesus { Our Lord / Our Saviour
God
Our Blessed Lady
Saint Joseph
Other Saints

II. Relations with God.

Love of God
Power of God
Prayer
Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament
Sufferings of Our Lord
Confidence in God

Grades III and IV—Continued

Reading Grade Range 3.—4.8 — Chronological Age Range 9.3—11.3 yrs.

Profession of Faith
Attendance At Mass
Constancy or Fidelity to God
Sorrow for Having Offended God

III. Relations with Neighbor.

Kindness
Obedience
Love for the Poor
Love for Parents
Instructing Others
Giving Good Example
Zeal for Souls

IV. Virtues Which Regulate Self.

Personal Holiness
Prayer
Sacrifice
Avoidance of Temptation
Love for the Sacraments
Purity
Obedience
Sorrow for Sin

Grades V and VI

Reading Grade Range 4.9—6.7 — Chronological Age Range 10.8—13.6

I. Characters Most Admired.

Jesus { Our Lord / Christ
God
Our Blessed Lady
St. Joseph
The Other Saints
The Apostles

II. Relations with God.

Prayer
Love of God
Power of God
Devotion to Blessed Sacrament
Confidence in God
Frequent Communion
Thanksgiving
Appreciation of Christ's Sufferings
Fidelity to God
Dependence on God
Mental Prayer—Meditation
Service of God
Faith in God
Prayer for Grace
Union with God
Adoration
Sorrow for Having Offended God
Keep Commandments

Grades V and VI—Continued

Reading Grade Range	Chronological Age Range
4.9—6.7	10.8—13.6

III. Relations with Neighbor.

Kindness	Love of Enemies
Obedience	Helpfulness to Others
Love of Neighbor	Alms-giving
Love of the Poor	Peacemaking
Prayer for Others	Forgive Offenses
Good Example	Patience
Love for Parents	Imitation
Instruct Others	Justice

IV. Virtues Which Regulate Self.

Holiness	Purity
Mental Prayer	Overcome Our Sins
Avoid Temptation	Oblation
Obedience	Humility
Keep the Commandments	Perseverance
Penance	Make Sacrifices
Practice of Religion	Hope

Grades VII and VIII

Reading Grade Range	Chronological Age Range
6.8—8.9	12.—13.9

I. Characters Most Admired.

Jesus { Our Lord / Christ / Our Saviour }
God
Our Blessed Lady
St. Joseph
Other Saints
The Apostles

II. Relations with God.

Love of God	Worship of God
Prayer	Presence of God
Fidelity to God	Sorrow for Having Offended God
Confidence in God	Faith in God
Frequent Communion	Adoration of God
Power of God	Appreciation of God's Goodness
Oblation of One's Self to God	Devotion in Hearing Mass
Affective Mental Prayer	Observance of Commandments
Conformity to God's Will	Service of God
Union with God	

III. Relations with Neighbor.

Kindness	Love and Respect for Parents
Obedience	Good Example

Grades VII and VIII—Continued

Reading Grade Range 6.8—8.9	Chronological Age Range 12.—13.9
Patience	Salvation of Others
Imitation	Love of Neighbor
Missionary Work	Instructing Others
Love of the Poor	Forgiveness of Offenses
IV. Virtues Which Regulate Self.	
Personal Holiness	Purity
Affective Mental Prayer	Unselfishness
Avoiding Temptation	Making Sacrifices
Obedience	Love of Suffering
Amending One's Life	Mortification
Perseverance	Truthfulness
Oblation of One's Self to God	Sincerity
Examen. of Conscience	Love for the Rosary

A Comparison of the Several Lists

Characters as Ideals

In comparing the characters that were chosen as ideals by children in all the grades we find a close resemblance. Jesus, sometimes mentioned as Our Lord, Christ, and Our Saviour, occurs first on all lists. God is mentioned second; then follow in order, Our Blessed Lady, Saint Joseph, other Saints, taken from the various *Lives of the Saints,* and the Apostles. There are no characters from the Old Testament since we have not included Bible Histories in our list of spiritual reading books. We have, however, a number of New Testament Stories which fact accounts for the selection of the Apostles as ideal characters.

Jesus—We find Jesus mentioned before God, not that children do not know that Jesus is God, but because many of the books on our list are, *Lives of Christ, New Testament Stories, Stories of Holy Communion,* etc., in which Jesus is the principal character.

The following stories about Jesus are included in this list:

The Children's King.....Sister of Notre Dame
Christ Our King.....Sister of Notre Dame
The Divine Story.....Holland

Friends of Jesus.....Religious of Holy Name Jesus
God's Book of the Holy Child.....Marie St. Ellerker
Gospel for the Laity.....Remler
Jesus of Nazareth.....Mother Loyola
Life of Christ.....Cochem
Life on Earth of Our Blessed Lord.....Keon
Miracles of Our Lord.....Religious of Holy Child Jesus
New Testament Stories.....Martindale
A Simple Life of Jesus.....Sister of Notre Dame
The Story Ever New.....Higgins
The Story of the Divine Child.....Lings
The Story of Our Lord.....Tynan

As evidence of how children appreciate the stories about our Blessed Lord and the ideals they derive from them, we shall give a summary of the principal reactions to the fifteen books named above. We shall not quote the responses for each book separately, but shall select the ones used most frequently by all. These represent the reactions of 469 children, 223 boys and 246 girls. These books teach us:

"How to bear trouble and sorrow."
"How to keep the commandments of God and the Church."
"How our Lord has been kind and forgiving to sinners."
"The things that God has done for us and how we are to repay Him."
"To be obedient and good."
"Not to fret because we do not get everything we want."
"To think of poor children who have no father or mother."
"To love Jesus and His Blessed Mother more dearly."
"To make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament every day."
"To go to communion as often as possible."
"That no matter what we ask for, Jesus will give it."
"That Jesus is nice to children."
"That Jesus answers children's prayers."
"That Jesus does everything for us."
"That Jesus is our God and our King."
"That Jesus came to redeem us."
"That Jesus is our best friend."
"That Jesus is innocent and holy."

We know that the boys and girls who name Jesus as the character they most admire also recognize Him as God, because in answer to the question, "What could you do to be like this person?", many have answered, "Nothing, because He is God," while others said, "I could not do as Jesus did,

because I have not the power." Just here, however, the teacher can be of great assistance. She must lead the children to see that even if Jesus is God, He is also imitable. Let her show them how to imitate Jesus in His charity, humility, patience, etc. This is very important, for union with God presupposes likeness to God. Hence children should be encouraged to make an effort to practice the virtues they admire in Jesus. Was not one of the reasons He became Incarnate "to show us the way to heaven by His teaching and example?"

God as an Ideal

The following responses give us an insight into how far children regard God as an ideal by admiring what the Saints did for Him.

"*St. John Baptist de la Salle* did great works for God." "He built schools that were the means of bringing many souls to God." "He visited a man in prison and changed his cloak for a ragged one through love of God."

St. Francis of Assisi. "In every way he tried to be like our Lord." "He was always doing the will of God, and this showed his love for God." "He told the sick man to be patient, God would repay him."

Joan of Arc. "She gave up her life for God." "Everybody thought she wouldn't come back, but she said God would help her, for she was born for this." "The reading of this book helps girls to be brave when God calls upon them, and also helps them to banish the temptations of the devil." "The reading of this book teaches me to be true to God and to suffer for Him." "It teaches me to love God, to trust in Him and to do what He commands." "It showed we should serve God and our country whenever we can, and we should be faithful to God. It teaches us to be brave and to be obedient to God."

St. Stanislaus Kostka. "It shows how we should love God and go to Holy Communion often." "It tells how brave Stanislaus must have been and how he loved God to brave

hundreds of miles to become a priest." "It teaches us to be noble, brave, honest and truthful, and also to love God."

Our Blessed Lady, Saint Joseph and other Saints. The reactions of children who read the lives of our Blessed Lady, Saint Joseph and the other Saints may be summarized as follows:

"I would like to read these books as often as possible that I may set good example as I grow older."
"They tell about many children who had great love for God and now they are saints."
"They tell how some saintly children made their First Communion."
"They teach us to love God more and to go to Mass as often as possible."
"They teach us that when in great danger and trouble not to despair in Jesus."

The reading of these books teach us:

"To be good and pious."
"To practice charity and obedience."
"To be faithful and to pray often."
"To go to confession often, and to be devout in hearing Mass."
"To be a martyr if God wants me to be."
"To be truthful and holy."
"Not to want everything for ourselves."
"To try to be like our Lord."
"To try to bring others to God."
"To be kind to the poor."
"How to love our Lord and pray to Him."

We shall now compare Lists II, III and IV for all Grades.

II—Our Relations With God

A comparison of the virtues listed under this heading reveals a close similarity for the three groups. In the second and third we find about the same virtues and practices as are listed in the first, with a few additions. We find appearing in the second and persisting in the third the following:

Union with God	Adoration
Frequent Communion	Observance of Commandments
Mental Prayer	Oblation of One's Self to God
Service of God	Gratitude or Thanksgiving

In the third group we find appearing for the first time:

Affective Mental Prayer
Presence of God
Appreciation of God's Goodness
Devout Hearing of Mass

Mental prayer in Group II means meditation, as implied in the following responses:

"Because the lives of the saints and their great works will keep deep in your mind and may some day lead you in their footsteps."
"You should fall asleep with some good thought in your mind."

On the other hand, as used in Group III, mental prayer means *affective mental prayer,* as the following reactions show:

"Talk to God, and learn to love Him."
"Where after this little interview with God, we feel new courage and peace."

In Group III we were surprised not to find "Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament" mentioned. The reason can be no other than that this very important practice was not treated in a manner to appeal to children, for if it were it would surely be mentioned. In the other two groups this was spoken of frequently, and we are sorry to find children in grades seven and eight omitting it entirely. Writers of books would do well to consider this and to make an effort to incorporate it into their writings. Of course, it is not absent entirely, for it is implied in *Frequent Communion* and *Devotion in Hearing Mass.* We should be glad, however, to find children desirous of making visits to the Blessed Sacrament at other times in order to obtain grace to overcome temptations, to meet the trials of life, to perform their daily duties well and, lastly, to enable them to draw closer to God each day that in thus doing they may learn from Him their part in the great Plan of Creation.

Relation With Our Neighbor

A comparison of the ideals listed under this heading shows about the same similarity as existed under the pre-

vious heading. We find all the virtues in Group I persisting through Groups II and III. In Group II the following new virtues appear:

Love of Neighbor
Prayers for Others
Love of Enemies
Alms-giving
Peace Making
Forgiveness of Offenses
Patience
Imitation
Justice

The new practices appearing in Group III are:

Missionary work, salvation of others. On the other hand, we do not find Justice, Alms-giving and Peace Making, all of which are listed in Group II, appearing in Group III. The reason for this may be ascribed to the fact that seventh and eighth grade books did not suggest these practices.

Virtues Which Regulate Self

The comparison of the virtues and practices listed under this heading for the three groups leads to a very interesting conclusion. There is here an evident manifestation of a gradual ascent in practices that tend to the perfection of self. In Group I we find personal holiness heading the list. Under this we included all statements of pupils who expressed a desire to become spiritually better as exemplified in the following statements:

"I could be more pious."
"I could try to be very holy,"
"I could try to be very good," etc.

The other items in the list represent specific ways that enable one to obtain the ideal of personal holiness. In Group I, for instance, we find:

Prayer
Avoiding Temptation
Love for the Sacraments
Sorrow for Sin
Sacrifice
Purity

In Group II, in addition to above, we find:

Mental Prayer
Penance
Unselfishness
Oblation of One's Self to God
Humility
Making Sacrifices
Perseverance
Hope

Even the most cursory examination of these virtues convinces us that the practice of them, if consistently persevered in, would soon lead one to the heights of holiness.

The virtues that appear for the first time under Group III are:

Affective Mental Prayer
Examination of Conscience
Appreciation of Suffering
Mortification
Love for the Rosary
Sincerity
Truthfulness

Of the above, affective mental prayer, appreciation of the value of suffering, mortification and love for the Rosary are virtues that have shone brilliantly in the lives of many Saints.

It is a very hopeful sign that children recognize these virtues when practiced by others and express a desire to imitate them. They do not, it is true, use the terminology we have employed, but their language connotes the same thing.

With the proper direction we have every reason to believe that children who cherish ideals similar to those represented in the above lists and who co-operate faithfully with God's grace, will develop into men and women with Christ-like characters, ready at all times to sacrifice themselves in the service of God and their neighbor. These are the men and women who will bring honor to God, glory to their Church and credit to their country.

CHAPTER VI

Summary, Conclusions and Suggestions

The purpose of this study as stated in Chapter I was:

I. To suggest interesting spiritual reading material for children in the Catholic elementary school.
II. To determine the qualities that make books interesting to children.
III. To show how ideals of conduct may be furnished to these children through the medium of spiritual reading.

These objectives were determined by interpreting the reactions of definite groups of children to this type of material.

Interest in Spiritual Reading Material

It was thought that the best way to determine whether or not spiritual reading has an interest value for children was by direct presentation of this type of material to definite groups. Accordingly, the one hundred and forty books on our list, graded by the technique explained in Chapter II, were distributed among the various grades in fourteen schools. Each book was read by an average of thirty children, fifteen boys and fifteen girls. The total number of children included was 878—391 boys and 487 girls.

Before the reading began, each child was given the Paragraph Meaning Section of the Stanford Reading Test, and his reading grade was kept on record. This enabled us to find out whether a book placed in a certain grade according to the technique, which takes care of structure only, belongs in that grade from the standpoint of its content. We found many books too difficult for the grades in which the technique placed them, and a few too easy. This proved that content is just as important as mechanics and structure in the grading of a book.

In order to find out whether or not the book read was interesting, each child was asked to fill out a form, the first part of which contained five statements, each one being an indication of a certain degree of interest. Values were then assigned to these statements. By finding the average of these values for each book, we were enabled to arrange the books belonging to each grade according to children's preferences. We also found the percentage of liking for each book. Both the averages and the percentages of liking are measures of interest, and while discrepancies between the two are apparent in Table V, where these results are shown, these can be accounted for in the different interpretations given to each of the five statements by many of the children, particularly the boys.

A close study of Table V reveals the fact that many of the books on our list have a high interest value for children, as evidenced by the high percentages assigned these books by the children who read and reported on them. Even the books with low percentages of liking have an interest value for a few, and for this reason they were retained on the list. Only by providing a variety of material can different types of children be reached.

A comparison of the final list given in Table V with the original list found in Table II shows that there are fewer books in the second list than in the first. This was due to the small number of reports received from some of the books. The reasons for this may be summed up as follows:

1. Lack of co-operation on the part of some teachers.
2. Lack of interest in this type of reading on the part of pupils.
3. Over-maturity of the content of many of the books.

A study of the reactions of girls and boys to certain books reveals both similarities and differences in their tastes. These are apparent in all grades, but the most striking variations seem to occur in grades seven and eight. In Grade VII, the boys seem to incline to the mystical and exhortational types more than the girls; while in Grade

VIII we find the reverse obtains. The Lives of the Saints are equally popular with both boys and girls. To make more definite the line of demarcation between the tastes of boys and girls in spiritual reading material a more exhaustive study would be necessary.

Qualities in Books That Make Them Interesting

The first question in the second part of the form, "Would you like to read this book again?", is also a measure of interest. This question was answered by "yes" or "no." The children were asked to write on the back of the form their reason for the answer they gave to this question. From these answers the writer was able to find out why some books are rejected and others preferred. The undesirable qualities which cause children to reject books are listed in Chapter IV. From a study of these we can readily see what are the qualities that render books interesting to children.

An analysis of a few books under the various types included in this study shows that certain types of books which appeal to some are rejected by others. This was determined by a study of the values which children assigned to the different books on the list. From the results of this particular part of the investigation it is clearly apparent that a certain type of book appeals to a certain type of child, but to find out the "why" of this, further experimentation is needed.

Spiritual Reading as a Source of Ideals

Questions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 in the second part of the form for checking children's reactions to the books read were designed to give some insight into the comprehension of the spiritual in the material read by the children. Question 2, "Which person in the book do you desire to be like?", and 3, "Why?", give us information in regard to the character most admired and the reason for so admiring. The interpretation of the answers of all the children to these two

questions enabled us to find out what type of character was admired most. The greatest frequency was given to *Jesus* as the most ideal character. This may be accounted for because of the various Lives of Our Lord included in this study. That the children recognized Jesus as God could be inferred from their responses. The other characters most admired were Our Blessed Lady, Saint Joseph, and the other Saints, mentioned in the various books read.

The interpretation of Questions 4, 5, and 6 [1] enabled us to formulate a table of virtues (Table IX) which refer to God, to neighbor and to self. The fact that children recognize these virtues when practiced by others, admire them and express a desire to imitate them gives us every reason to believe that they will influence children's conduct and will act as a powerful motive force in the formation of a Christ-like character in those who practice them.

General Conclusions

The list of books offered in this study is only a tentative one. Many of these books were not written primarily for children. We have drawn largely on adult literature. It is hoped, however, that it will serve as a working list until such time as writers and teachers, by frequent experimentation, will be able to formulate one designed to meet the needs of the pre-adolescent and adolescent boys and girls of our day.

The books listed in Table V were read silently by the children themselves; they were not read to them by the teacher. The percentages recorded there evidence the interest appeal which the books reported on possessed for the children who read them. Many of the books in all grades have been given high percentages by the children who read them, which proves conclusively that spiritual reading has a high interest value for children.

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[1] 4. What one action of this person did you like? 5. Why did you like it? 6. What could you do to be like this person?

The ideals listed in Chapter V bear evidence to the fecundity of spiritual reading for providing various types of ideals. Jesus was named more frequently than any other character as the one children most admired.

The various Lives of Our Lord, His Blessed Mother and the Saints provided sources from which the children selected the virtues that made the greatest appeal to them. These were classified into virtues which refer to God, to neighbor and to self. In this classification there is evidenced from grade to grade a gradual increase in the number and quality of these virtues.

As writers of spiritual reading books for children devise ways and means of improving the quality of such books and learn how better to adapt them to the experiences of growing boys and girls, other ideals for imitation will be suggested.

The interpretation of children's reactions to the books read enlightens us in regard to the qualities that are responsible for children's rejection of books. Spiritual reading books which do not possess the qualities that make for interest in other books are not popular with children. The highest percentages of liking were assigned to those books which possess the desirable qualities referred to in Chapter IV, and the books with low percentages were voted so simply because they lack those qualities.

Lastly, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that the style in which a book is written, as well as its outward form, are very important. Surely the spiritual element can be made more effective in a style that elicits the interest of children than in one that repels them. The physical make-up of a book, too, plays a very large part in deciding children's preferences. For further information on this point, we would refer writers of children's books to a study made by Miss Florence E. Bamberger,[2] of the Johns Hopkins University. Writers of juvenile spiritual literature should

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[2] *The Effect of the Physical Make-up of a Book upon Children's Selection*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1922.

make these two considerations the object of special study, for if reading of this type is to exert a maximum of influence for good over children, then it must be written in a manner that appeals to them.

Suggestions

1. The most important single factor in the initiation and effective carrying out of a successful spiritual reading program for any school is the person who is held directly responsible for it. On her spiritual training the success or failure of the whole project depends. The one most ideally fitted for such a duty is the classroom teacher. But all religious teachers have not the solid spiritual training necessary to inspire and direct children in a program of spiritual reading. The teacher who has just completed her three years of religious training—the maximum in most religious communities—is seldom arrived at a stage of spiritual development where she can direct others. She is, herself, only a beginner in the spiritual life.

We would suggest that Superiors appoint in every school one teacher, who, by her experience, learning and piety, is fitted to discharge this duty. This need not be the local Superior, who, frequently, is also the Principal of the school. This individual is usually so overburdened with the temporalities of the school and house that the supervision of a spiritual reading program would be next to impossible. The teacher appointed to supervise the spiritual reading of the pupils might be also a Director of Personnel. She can direct the classroom teachers, who, under wise supervision, will be of great assistance to her in the carrying out of her program. The development of their own spiritual life will be given a great impetus by contact with one who knows the essential practices necessary for spiritual development.

If young religious teachers are not making consistent spiritual progress, the reason can often be traced to the many activities connected with a busy mission life. Those

who can help the young have too many other obligations to discharge within the short space of one day. The consequence is that these young religious founder about doing the best they can, but, because of lack of proper direction, they are not making consistent progress in the spiritual life.

2. Each classroom should have its own library of spiritual books, and pupils should be free to take these books at stated times. In our opinion fifteen minutes a day could be allowed for private reading. The advantages accruing to the children would amply repay for this expenditure of time.

3. It would be well to keep some check on this reading—a private interview, a class discussion or a written check similar to the one used in this study.

4. New books should be added from time to time that children may be given as great a variety as possible. If teachers are in doubt as to the grades in which these books belong, they can grade them according to the technique used in this study. If, after trial, it is seen that the content is too difficult, they can be placed a grade or two higher.

5. The Director of Personnel should appoint the teachers most advanced in spirituality to act as student-advisors, ever ready to assist pupils who seek direction. These officers can be of great assistance also in vocational guidance work, and should make a close study of the children's conduct to determine, if possible, how they are being influenced by their reading.

6. Finally, it would be well for each school to publish from time to time the results obtained from the effective operation of a spiritual reading program that others may profit by their experience.

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